World Religions: A Resource
for U.S. Army Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants.

by

Kenneth L. Sampson

A Thesis Project
Submitted to the Faculty,
Princeton Theological Seminary,
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Theology.

Dr. Charles Ryerson III,
Elmer K. and Ethel R. Timby Professor of the History of
Religions, Faculty Advisor.

6 May 1996

19960614 071

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 1

Abstract

This project serves as a resource on world religions. Its underlying argument is that the world-wide resurgence of religious nationalism (fundamentalism) affects operations conducted by the United States Armed Forces.

Based upon Appendix E (Guide to Analysis of Local Religions), of FM 16-1 (Religious Support), this manual acquaints readers with aspects of selected world religions. It first analyzes the impact of religious nationalism on military operations. Next, it treats topics contributing to the development of culturally sensitive soldier/leaders. An analysis of designated world religions follows. Topics treated include the specific religion's broad influence on leadership, belief, ethical motivation, culture, worship, politics and manners/customs. A sample country study shows how ministry teams can quickly and readily make information available to their deploying personnel. Lastly, the guide concludes with an annotated bibliography of helpful resources.

The primary audience is chaplains and chaplain assistants. Hopefully, this guide can be part of their 'kit bag' of helpful resources. Other military personnel--Special Forces teams, members of the Civil Affairs, Intelligence, Personnel, Language Study and Foreign Area Officer communities--in addition to commanders of deploying units, can benefit.

Readers are encouraged to skim, skip, select and use the information provided. Some is theological. Much is culture and country specific. The 'manners and customs' guidance, designed to be straightforward, practical and soldier oriented, may assist all.

Foreword

The intent of this project is to assist U.S. Army chaplains, chaplain assistants, soldiers and leaders in their awareness of world religions and the impact of those religions on military operations.

I do not write free from bias. I contend that religions do exert an influence, whether overt or subtle, on military operations. I believe unit ministry teams--chaplains and chaplain assistants--can credibly advise their commands on the nature of religion and its impact on military operations.

I seek to be positive, affirming, and 'peace enhancing' in these treatments of the world's religions. The goal is to 'get under the skin,' and see the world 'through the eyes' of those who practice a given religion. I am selective. Not all religions are treated. Time, scheduling and energy factors kept me from considering Judaism, Shintoism, primal religions of the Americas and other groups. Also, the 'time lines' used to introduce each section, while drawn from The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, are selective, based on my own inclinations and interests.

I write as an evangelical Protestant Christian of the Reformed persuasion. Throughout this project, Hebrews 12:1,2 gave inspiration: "Therefore, seeing we are surrounded by so great a crowd of witnesses...let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus..." I am indebted to family members, friends and the church at large for their support during this work.

My wife, Kathryn Stewart Boyce Sampson, offered detailed grammatical insight and correction. I thank her for her inspiration, strength and steadying influence. Any errors or syntax flaws are solely my responsibility.

I thank Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton University and the United States Army Chaplaincy for making this ten month period of study possible. Many times I've shook my head in amazement, considering the privilege it's been to study here this year.

World Religions: A Resource for
U.S. Army Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants

I. Introduction.

    1. Background and guide to analysis of local religions.

    2. Impact of religious nationalism.

    3. Need for command/soldier/Unit Ministry Team (UMT) awareness.

    4. Approach to world religions:

        a. Respect and civility.

        b. Cultural sensitivity--ethnocentrism, prejudice, stereotypes and generalizations.

        c. Specific religious issues: Religion/culture viewpoints; dialogue; necessity of theological integration; exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist views.

II. Analysis:

    1. Hinduism.

    2. Islam.

    3. Buddhism.

    4. Aspects of Chinese Religions.

    5. Aspects of Primal Religions--African, Santeria, and Voodou.

    6. Aspects of Orthodox Eastern (Eastern Orthodox Church) Christianity.

    7. Aspects of Liberation Theology (Christianity).

III. Sample analysis of Sri Lanka.

IV. Annotated bibliography of resources helpful for UMTs.

V. Appendix: New and Intense Religious Movements.

Pronunciation Key (Adapted from <u>HarperCollins Dictionary of World Religions</u>, ed. Jonathan Smith, [New York: HarperCollins, 1995]), p. xxvi.

Symbol	Sound	Symbol	Sound
a	cat	ng	sing
ah	father	o	hot
ahr	lard	of	go
air	care	oi	boy
aw	jaw	oo	foot
ay	pay	*oo*	boot
b	bug	oor	poor
ch	chew	or	for
d	do	ou	how
e,eh	pet	p	pat
ee	seem	r	run
f	fun	s	so
g	good	sh	sure
h	hot	t	toe
hw	whether	th	thin
i	it	*th*	then
i	sky	ts	tsetse
ihr	ear	tw	twin
j	joke	uh	ago
k	king	uhr	her
kh	ch as in German Buch	v	vow
ks	vex	w	weather
kw	quill	y	young
l	love	z	zone
m	mat	zh	vision
n	not		

Introduction: Outline

World Religions: A Resource for
U.S. Army Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants.

"Religion increasingly is seen as a renewed force, and is recognized as an important factor in the modern world in all aspects of life--cultural, economic, and political. It is no longer a matter of surprise to find religious factors at work in areas and situations of political tension."[1]

"...the growing influence of global religions, from Islam to the Russian Orthodoxy to the fast-multiplying New Age sects, needs hardly be documented. All will be key players in the world system of the twenty-first century."[2]

Military missions in the post-Cold War world--peace operations, peacekeeping, nation building--require culturally sensitive soldiers and leaders.[3] Commanders analyze the "cultural, religious, and ethnic customs in the region[s]" that include their area of operations."[4] Soldiers "should be aware of the relevant aspects of the area's history, economy, culture and any other significant factors."[5]

Chaplains and chaplain assistants--the Unit Ministry Team (UMT)--are the commander's "subject matter experts" for issues

---

[1]Charles Davis, Religion and the Making of Society, (New York: Cambridge Press, 1994), Introduction to the series, no page given.

[2]Alvin and Heidi Toffler, War and Anti-War (Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century), (Boston, Mass: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), p. 244.

[3]"The new military needs soldiers who can use their brains, can deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures, who can tolerate ambiguity, take initiative, and ask questions..." (Ibid.), p. 74.

[4]Field Manual 100-5, Operations, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), p. 14-5.

[5]Brigadeer General Morris J. Boyd, U.S. Army, "Peace Operations: A Capstone Doctrine," Military Review, May-June 95, p. 22.

concerning religion and its impact. "The UMT advises the commander and staff on the beliefs, practices and customs of religious groups in the area of operations (AO)."[6]

My purpose is twofold--both argumentative and expositional. I argue that chaplains and chaplain assistants can carry out their advising mission with great precision and competence. Their input, for the execution of military operations, is invaluable.

I also present a packaged, broad-based, contextual overview of various world religions, specifically geared to the UMT audience. By explaining, informing and clarifying themes concerning faith and practice, this paper provides a guide for advising, teaching and interacting with world religion cultures.[7]

Considering the tremendous amount and diversity of information available, this guide serves to make material accessible and 'in hand.'[8] In addition, it integrates topics

---

[6]Field Manual 16-1, <u>Religious Support</u>, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), p. 3-8.

[7]I do not treat American expressions of world religions. <u>Religious Requirements and Practices</u> (A Handbook for Chaplains), J. Gordon Melton, Project Director (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains), provides adequate information for most American religious groups. Some world religion expressions vary little from the accounts listed in <u>Religious Requirements and Practices.</u>

[8]At times I was overwhelmed by the task at hand and thought of the following story related by Carl E. Braaten in <u>No Other Gospel</u>, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992), p. 103. "At Oxford University is a gigantic painting of a man and a small boy by the sea. The painting is based on a story told about the great St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, who was writing his famous book on the Trinity, the greatest classic ever written on the subject. As the story goes, Augustine was walking along the coast one day when he met a small boy pouring sea water into a hole in the ground. Augustine watched him for some time and eventually asked him what he was doing. 'I'm pouring the Mediterranean Sea into

treated while studying world religions at Princeton Seminary and

University during the 1995-1996 school year. It equips me to

better teach or advise in future Army chaplaincy assignments.

Hopefully, UMTs will find it helpful as well.

My audience is a specific one--chaplains like Paul Yacovone,

Bill McCoy, Dave Epperson, Calvin Dixon; chaplain assistants like

Sergeants First Class Diaz and Johnson, Staff Sergeants

Buffenbarger or Clarkson.   UMT members like these can use this

analysis as part of a "kit bag" of resources to enable them to

possess greater credibility with their soldiers and commands.

I comply with the following outline, based on Annex E of

Field Manual 16-1, Religious Support.[9]

---

this hole,' replied the boy. 'Don't be so stupid,' admonished
Augustine, 'you can't fit the sea into that little hole. You're
wasting your time.' 'And so are you,' the boy shot back, 'trying
to write a book on God.'" Yet, with determination (some may say
foolhardiness), I kept to the task at hand.

[9]Field Manual 16-1, Religious Support, (Washington, D.C.:
U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), E-1,2. For purposes of
emphasis and clarity, I modified the outline.

Guide to Analysis of Local Religions

Areas of the Religion: Scope of religious influence.

Clergy/Leadership: Numbers, location and education of
leadership; selection process, training, organization and
discipline; base of operations.

Religious Beliefs: Major tenets of religion--faith, impact of
faith on life, concepts of salvation and the hereafter,
myths--heroes, villains, rivalries, friends, foes and
symbols; world and life view of religiously affected
population.

Worship: Forms, places, frequency and significance of worship;
rituals; organization--hierarchy, small group emphasis.

Ethics/Motivation of the Populace: Motivational role of
religion; degree of religious conviction; ethics.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Influence of Religion: Impact of
religion on society and economics; acceptable kinds of
social interaction; art, and architecture.[10]

Politics: Governmental relationship and political influence of
religion; religious/political outlook--control.

Manners and Customs:[11] Helpful, practical reminders of cultural
issues which further harmonious interaction with the
populace or members of the host nation armed forces; taboos
to be aware of.

In this introductory portion, I first discuss the challenge
confronting military and UMT personnel: the impact of religious
nationalism on operations throughout the world. Next, this paper
outlines the need for command, NCO-soldier and UMT to address

---

[10]I mention 'art and architecture' because few expressions
can do more to 'build bridges' between people of differing
cultures. For deploying soldiers, knowledge of these sensitive
though critical issues can create agreeable relations with local
populations. Also, soldiers need to be stretched. Art and
architecture add the aesthetic dimension, so helpful in
appreciating and enjoying another culture.

[11]I add 'societal manner and customs' because historically,
UMTs are the only ones present at 'on-the-ground' briefings to
address these concerns.

this need within their area of operations.[12] Then, I look at the

general approach we take to world religions and cultures--

practicing civility and respect; maintaining cultural

sensitivity; and developing broad awareness of specific religious

issues which characterize the approach and attitude we take to

world religions.

The Challenge

> "From Russia, where fascists wrap themselves in the
> flag of Orthodox Christianity, to India, where Hindu pogroms
> are carried out against Muslims, to the Middle East, where
> Iran promotes terror in the name of Islam, the world looks
> with wonderment at the multiplying millions who seem eager
> to hurl themselves back into the twelfth century..."[13]

> "The most fanatical, the cruelest political struggles
> are those that have been colored, inspired and legitimized
> by religion."[14]

Few deny the presence of religious nationalism in the arena

of contemporary world politics.[15] Whether Sufi Islam in

Chechnya, Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Muslim-Orthodox-

Catholic rivalry in the Balkans, Voodou rites in Haiti--religious

influence is felt throughout our world. Political analysts once

---

[12]"The operational commander, who is ignorant of or discounts the importance of religious belief, can incite his enemy, offend his allies, alienate his own forces, and arouse public opinion." (Paul R. Wrigley, The Impact of Religious Belief in the Theater of Operations, Naval War College paper, 16 June 1995), introduction.

[13]Toffler, Alvin and Heidi, War and Anti-War, (New York: Friendship Press, 1989), p. 218.

[14]Hans Kung, Toward Dialogue, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1994), p. 442.

[15]See Toffler, Ibid., pp. 90, 244 and D. Johnston (ed.) Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, (New York: Oxford Press, 1994), pp. 266-267.

thought scientific rationality, with accompanying

secular/humanistic ideologies, would dominate world and life

views throughout the world. Instead, "the modernization process,

rather than causing religion to weaken and disappear, often makes

its [religion's] public role stronger and a more necessary part

of the process of state-building or revolutionary

transformation."[16]

At the strategic, operational and tactical levels, our

myopic views seldom appreciate this critical role of world

religions. Undoubtably influenced by the Constitution's rigorous

separation of church and state, and the American proclivity to

separate the individual spiritual life from the public one, many

State Department officials fail to take into account this

importance of the spiritual.[17] Authors Alvin and Heidi Toffler

see simplistic 'Geo-economic' approaches to explain world power,

where economic and military factors prevail, as obsolete because

they overlook science, technology, culture, religion and values

---

[16]D. Johnston, Ibid., p. 23. See also Mark Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State, (Berkeley, Calif: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1993), p. 2.

[17]D. Johnston identifies at least four reasons American diplomacy fails to take into account the spiritual dimension: (1) A materialistic determinism bias [the proclivity to see all issues in economic terms] on the part of State Department officials. (2) Amateurism in placement of personnel in important overseas diplomatic assignments [cronyism and political paybacks]. (3) The globalization of assignments, moving personnel often for necessary career progression. (4) The 'realistic' intellectual framework of State Department officials sees secular, economic, and military factors as of prime importance. Religion, a 'soft' enterprise, is left out. I would add a fifth factor, a personal bias against religion by officials due to their own misgivings and negative personal experiences with religion. (Ibid., pp. 14, 292).

in their assessments.[18] Author Mark Juergensmeyer sees this disregard as a source of much of the "passion behind religious nationalists' position[s]." The perceived "Cold War attitude of arrogance and intolerance" towards religious nationalists arouses, stimulates and rekindles their more radical religious sensitivities.[19]

The sheer breadth of the issue is likewise a problem. Religion is not monolithic. The diversity evident, when we observe the application of religion to over six thousand cultures throughout the world, can overwhelm. The study becomes a 'gargantuan task,' 'exceedingly difficult,' a 'stern and relentless business,' a task which becomes 'more than the work of a lifetime.'[20]

Despite these difficulties, however, my purpose is to provide a readily accessible guide for UMTs. We must be

---

[18]Toffler, p. 17.

[19]Juergensmeyer, p. 199.

[20]See: Clark Pinnock, <u>A Wideness in God's Mercy</u>, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), p. 15. "The study of world religions is a gargantuan task...Mastering the current theories is difficult." J.N.D. Anderson, <u>Christianity and Comparative Religion</u>, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1974), p. 8. "...no one scholar can ever hope to cover the whole field...it is exceedingly difficult--if not impossible--really to enter into the meaning and ethos of another religion without an intimate acquaintance with those who put that religion into practice in their daily lives and, ideally, a competent knowledge of the language or languages in which its basic literature is written." Stephen Neill, <u>Christian Faith and Other Faiths</u>, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1982), p. 19. "...the comparative study of religion is not for those of timid spirits and queasy stomachs. It is a stern and relentless business." D. Johnston, <u>Ibid</u>., p. 281, "...it calls for rigorous study and critical analysis that recognizes the variety of world views alive today, the areas in which they differ, and the points at which they intersect...It is more than the work of a lifetime."

realists.   UMTs, along with their Civil Affairs and Intelligence community counterparts, are the 'subject matter experts' in matters pertaining to world religions.   Force projection Army doctrine calls for rapid deployments--within eighteen hours--to potential hot spots around the world.   To advise soldiers and the command on indigenous religions and cultures necessitates UMTs having resources available on a moment's notice.[21]   Command credibility depends upon quick, responsible and competent fulfillment of the UMT role as 'advisors on matters of religion and the impact of religion on military operations at hand.'[22]

Few of us have timely information to credibly advise our commands or instruct personnel in world/indigenous population religions.   UMTs are seldom 'in the know' on current developments in religions/cultures of projected areas of operation.   While we do have an abundance of resources concerning beliefs, we lack easily obtained information on political, socio--economic, cultural, ethical, leadership, manners and customs distinctives of various religions.   Thus this guide.[23]

Commanders need to be aware of the religio-cultural impact upon operations.   At the strategic and operational level, the tendency to adopt an 'annihilationist strategy' focuses too often

---

[21]Usually we are primed--through CNN, threat briefings, rumors--knowing in advance of possible deployment areas.   This allows more time for research and obtaining accurate knowledge on the area of operations.

[22]See Field Manual 16-1, <u>Religious Support</u>, p. 3-8.

[23]I write as a Protestant, Christian Chaplain, endorsed by the Reformed Church in America.   I possess no 'zealot's fire' concerning world religions.   Rather, my interest is no more, nor less, than the majority of Army Chaplains I have encountered.

on tactical victories with little concern for long term ethnic

and cultural impact.[24] On the tactical plane, commanders--from

the company level on up--often are the ones engaging in dialogue

with local chieftains and political-military leaders. In

addition, Joint United Nations missions involve close

partnerships with military units/leadership coming from countries

whose 'ways are not our own.'[25] The subtle and overt religious

and cultural issues affecting these interactions are important.[26]

---

[24]"In the history of American strategy, the direction taken
by the American conception of war made most American strategists,
through most of the time span of American history, strategists of
annihilation...the wealth of the country and its adoption of
unlimited aims in war...[enabled] the strategy of annihilation
[to become] characteristically the American way of war." (Russell
Weigley, The American Way of War, [Bloomington, IN: Indiana
University Press, 1973]), p. xxii. On the soldier level, this
strategy too often translates into "Kill 'em all, let God sort
'em out'" or "When you've got 'em by the shorts, their hearts and
minds will follow." If anything, peace operations--Haiti,
Somalia, Bosnia--demonstrate the need for sensitivity rather than
bombast in approaching other cultures.

[25]General Matthew Ridgway, in his memoirs, described the
benefits of such cross-cultural knowledge. "That journey through
Central America taught me one thing that stood me in good stead
later, when I served as Chairman of the Inter-American Defense
Board. I learned that you should not expect the Latins to adapt
themselves to the swift pace of life to which the North Americans
are accustomed. It may appear to you that what you wish to
accomplish may be achieved in six hours, or six days. If,
instead, it takes six months, you must contain your soul; you
must have patience. It is their way, and they will not change.
And to be perfectly honest, I am not at all sure that their way
is not the better." (Soldier, [New York: Curtis Publishing,
1956]), p. 41.

[26]Managers (and commanders), "cannot usually expect to
force-fit members of another culture into his/her own cultural
norms. They cannot easily be made to accept his/her perceptions
of reality as superior to values in their own culture...Only when
you feel comfortable with each other can you expect your business
to proceed with any rapidity." (Richard Mead, International
Management: Cross Cultural Dimensions, [Cambridge, Mass:
Blackwell, 1994]), pp. 6, 60.

Non-Commissioned Officers and soldiers benefit from such religious and cultural sensitivity. The decentralized nature of command encourages small group leaders (at the squad and platoon level) to exercise initiative and make decisions. Quick-paced missions such as 'Operation Just Cause' required soldiers to quickly turn from 'steely-eyed-killers' into humanitarian relief agents almost overnight. Applying knowledge of religious/cultural customs and practices directly promotes 'successful mission accomplishment.' Joint service with Allied Forces--Korean Augmentees to the United States Army (KATUSA) in Korea; Soviet, Ukrainian, or Pakistani United Nations partners-- all require cultural and religious sensitivity.[27]

In peace operations, UMTs, by their very designation as religious specialists, may serve as observing partners of negotiation teams conducting liaison with local leaders. Religious/cultural awareness can increase the possibility of positive outcomes in the sensitive discussions which take place. Additionally, for chaplains, keeping current with present theological trends compels us to come to terms with world religions.[28]

---

[27]"Effective cross-cultural management means working with members of the other culture, tolerating differences so far as possible, and recognizing their priorities when developing shared priorities." (Mead, p. 5).

[28]See: Carl Braaten, <u>No Other Gospel</u>, (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 1992), p. 93. 'Since the Enlightenment...Christian theology has met one challenge after another. The challenge of history to think about Christian origins in a fully critical manner came first. Then came the challenge of critical epistemology with its turn to the subject, followed by the challenge of science, with its evolutionary hypothesis. Today the challenge is the plurality of religions." Clark Pinnock, <u>A Wideness in God's Mercy</u>, p. 7. "*By all accounts* the meaning of

Approach to World Religions: The Necessity of Respect

>   "[C]ivility, which I take to be a strong virtue and not simply wimpishness, requires that we not try to cram our beliefs down anybody's throats, whether we be Christian or non-Christian or even anti-Christian. But that we all try to articulate as persuasively as we can, what it is that we believe..."[29]

Respect--a demonstration of civility--must mark our treatment of other religions. Consideration for others, fair exposition of their views, an 'external and internal politeness' is the demeanor required. This respectful bearing characterizes UMTs who seek to 'build bridges' with others; who practice humility, see 'people as people,' and model a tolerant and peaceful approach.

American Bible Society pioneer translator and scholar Dr. Eugene Nida outlines four 'rules' to aid us in dealing with

---

Christ's lordship in a religiously plural world is one of the hottest topics on the agenda of theology in the nineties...I believe this issue is second to none in importance for Christian theology." (<u>Ibid</u>.).

[29] "To be civil was to genuinely care about the larger society. It required a heartfelt commitment to your fellow-citizens. It was a willingness to promote the well-being of people who were very different, including people who seriously disagreed with you on important matters. Civility wasn't merely an external show of politeness. It included an inner politeness as well." (Richard Mouw, <u>Uncommon Decency</u>, [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992]), p. 12-13.
       Respect also shows appreciation for the family importance often expressed by religion. "The hope is that you will treat us fairly in the discussion and that you will bargain with us as brothers who share in the goods they inherit from their father. All of them share in them. Nothing belongs to one rather than to another. So we and you should be on a par in the discussion." (Habib ibn Hidman Abu Raitah, in Sidney Griffith, "The Prophet Muhammad, His Scripture and His Message According to the Christian Apologies in Arabic and Syriac From the First Abbasid Century." Class Reserve Reading, HR 230, "Christians and the Encounter with Islam," Dr. Sidney Griffith, Fall, 1995, Princeton Theological Seminary).

others, thus 'building bridges' with them.[30] After first

adapting ourselves to local customs of etiquette, we then show a

'vital interest' in other's beliefs. This 'vital interest' is

necessary for effective communication. It is "not enough to

avoid contemptuous attitudes toward another person's ideas. One

should be vitally and sympathetically concerned with what other

people think."[31]

Dr. Nida's third 'bridge builder' is to seek ways to 'heal

tender susceptibilities and feelings' often arising from

discrimination and painful histories of bigotry and prejudice.

Lastly, he encourages us to "find matters of essential agreement

and identity, encouraging points of contact in which we have

similar outlooks...It is not enough that we should understand

others (this can be a subtle form of patronizing); they must also

understand us."[32]

In our instructional briefings, we can follow Dr. Nida's

wisdom. Empathetic understanding, a respectful 'getting

acquainted one with the other,' can be our realizable goal.[33]

------

[30]Eugene Nida, <u>Customs, Culture and Christianity</u>, (London: Tyndale Press, 1963), pp. 71-72.

[31]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 71.

[32]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 72.

[33]To amplify, Dr. Charles Kimball, Southern Baptist clergyperson and negotiator during the Iran hostage crisis, writes, the "...positive side of this effort to refrain from judgment is empathetic understanding...we should draw upon our religious background and experience, not to judge, but to understand...The goal, initially, is to try and grasp how the world looks from the perspective of another...Historians of religion frequently advocate restraint or refraining from judgment as a guiding principle in the study of religious traditions...we refrain from evaluating the truth or value of particular elements within the tradition on the basis of our own

Humility--an observable 'reverence toward others'--promotes respect and genuine amicability. Writes respected theologian and seminary president Dr. Richard Mouw, "[a]rrogant self-righteousness must have no place in our hearts. It's one thing to believe that God's revelation is the only sure and certain guide for our journey; it's another thing to act as if we ourselves possessed a sure and certain grasp of all the complexities of revealed truth."[34]

To treat 'people as people' involves seeing others as humans, "people, just as we are, with virtues and follies, insight and limitations and that their way of life has continuity and meaning..."[35] We can "treat people [and their ideas] with courtesy not because we know them, but simply because we see them as human beings like ourselves."[36] To move beyond "the distorting veil of stereotypical images and numbing prejudices and approach one another as human beings who care about their families and societies" opens "the options for better relations and cooperative ventures" between us.[37]

---

religious experience...[so that they may] recognize themselves in the description." (Striving Together, [Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1991]), pp. 15, 16. Catholic theologian Hans Kung also provide insight: "We are living in a new period of humanity when peace is not only a possibility, but a necessity...We should do everything in order to get acquainted with one another...We should know what is positive about other religions, not only the negative. We then have also a reason to challenge the others because we know about them." ("He that is not for us is against us," Perspectives, Feb. 1990), p. 5.

[34]Mouw, p. 166.

[35]Nida, p. 14.

[36]Mouw, p. 14.

[37]Kimball, p. 120.

A tolerant appraisal of the differing world religions stems from our calling. As UMT members carrying out their constitutional mandate (the Free Exercise of Religion clause of the 1st Amendment), we adhere to a divinely sanctioned plea for justice.[38] To 'pursue peace with everyone' (Hebrews 12:14)-- follows the pattern of the New Testament and early church.[39]

Approach to World Religions: The Necessity of Cultural Sensitivity

Culture, the "values, beliefs and attitudes influencing behavior and relationships within" a given group, requires our sensitive care and treatment.[40] The behavior of a people does

---

[38]"God's call for justice implies elimination of discriminatory and oppressive treatment that gives preference to religions of some citizens over those of others." (Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Reforming American Society," Reformed Journal, April 1973, p. 13. Theologian Richard John Neuhaus expresses this idea as well. "It is the will of God that we be tolerant of those who disagree with us about the will of God." (As quoted in D. Johnston), p. 266.

[39]"...pursue peace with everyone,' (Hebrews 12:14), the society was at least as multicultural and pluralistic as ours is today. The early Christians were surrounded by a variety of religious and moral systems. Their pagan neighbors worshiped many gods, and that worship was sometimes so depraved that it would even be shocking in today's permissive culture...Our forebearers in the faith paid clearly for their commitment to the gospel. If they could work at treating people with gentleness and reverence in such an environment, what is our excuse for attempting less?" (Mouw, p. 17). Evangelicals can still "...claim absoluteness and finality for Christ and His finished work; but that very claim forbids us to claim absoluteness and finality for our understanding of it. Firm faith in revelation is not incompatible with tentativeness and tolerance in our attempts to interpret this faith to [human]kind." (Gordon W. Allport, "The Religious Context of Prejudice," The Phenomenon of Convergence and the Course of Prejudice, [The Edward F. Gallahue World Religions Conference on Interfaith and Intercultural Communication, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, October 27-29, 1964]), p. 8.

[40]Mead, p. 6.

conform to a patterned, often interrelated design.[41]   To understand one element of a given culture, it is necessary to relate it to the broader cultural context.   As previously mentioned, culture, especially religious culture, is not monolithic but diverse.[42]   Cultural sensitivity prescribes a proper understanding and appraisal of ethnocentrism, prejudice, stereotypes and generalizations.

Ethnocentrism, is the "practice of viewing alien customs by applying the concepts and values of one's own culture...a viewing other peoples' ways of life through our own colored glasses."[43] It often leads to unhealthy pride, arrogant self-righteousness and feelings of superiority which can destroy personal relationships.[44]

Overcoming this selfishly proud way of looking at other cultures can be painful.   Surmounting the "shortsightedness imposed upon us by familiarity with our own way of life" involves becoming conscious of and analytical about our own cultural

---

[41]Nida, p. 52.

[42]"Popular journalism often treats the Arabs as culturally homogeneous...[during Desert Storm it] became clear that this monolithic concept was inadequate...varied interests and values expressed by Iraqis, Kuwaitis, Saudi Arabians, and Egyptians...During the fighting, Iraqi homogeneity was taken for granted.   But the chaos that followed revealed cultural differences between Kurdish Iraqis and Arab Iraqis, between the various Arab tribes that make up the population, and between adherents to Sunni Islam and Shi'ite Islam." (Mead, p. 11).

[43]Lyman Reed, Preparing Missionaries for Intercultural Communication, (Pasadena, Calif: Wm Carey Library, 1985), p. 21.

[44]Ibid., p. 21-23.

glasses.[45] The "primary aim must be to broaden our horizon of
understanding and information."[46]

Missionary anthropologist Charles Kraft comes down hard on
the evils inherent in an unbridled ethnocentrism:

> "...our feelings of cultural superiority are completely
> unwarranted and utterly untenable in the face of the mass of
> anthropological data coming to us concerning the six
> thousand or more cultures of the world...no culture,
> especially not ours, can be regarded as superior in every
> way to every other culture...[There has] not been an
> evolutionary development of cultures from a state of overall
> inferiority to a state of overall superiority. One culture
> is thus no better overall than any other culture, though in
> areas of our expertise we may claim superiority...we must
> give at least equal attention to areas where other cultures
> show strength..."[47]

An analysis of one's own cultural orientation and world and
life view aids in freeing one from ethnocentric constrictions.
Realizing the far-reaching impact of American culture on the
world-at-large, and our accompanying obligation to use this
influence with responsibility, significantly increases our need
to flee ethnocentric perspectives.[48]

---

[45]Nida, p. 10. See also Toffler, p. 248. "...different
views of the world [are] hard for most Americans, whose daily
life is among the fastest on earth and whose time horizons are
truncated, to empathize with the feelings of warring Arabs and
Israelis who defend their positions citing 2,000 year old claims.
For Americans, history vanishes into itself very quickly, leaving
only the immediate instance."

[46]Kung, _Toward Dialogue,_ p. xx.

[47]Charles Kraft, _Christianity in Culture_, (Maryknoll, New
York: Orbis Press, 1981), p. 52.

[48]Dr. Raymond Fong, secretary for evangelism of the World
Council of Churches, describes this responsibility. "You [USA]
impact the world not only on the political level. Your presence
is everywhere--your TV programmes, your radios, your music, your
lifestyle. Not to mention your multi-national corporations, your
soldiers and tourists. The impact of the USA on ordinary people,
those who are in the churches, is tremendous and the impact is
not simply political, it is also economic, cultural and yes,

An analysis of prejudice is especially important for chaplains and chaplain assistants, due to its close association with religious intolerance.[49] Social psychologist Gordon W. Allport discovered that "on the average, churchgoers in our country harbor more racial, ethnic, and religious prejudice than do non-churchgoers."[50] This is not because religion, by itself, instills prejudice. Rather, "a large number of people, by virtue of their psychological makeup, require for their economy of living [self-doubt and insecurity, guilt, and fear of failure] both prejudice and religion."[51] Prejudice violates standards of

---

emotional. The USA's impact on the people of the world has a big capacity for good and for evil. Most people look to the USA...expect a lot more of the USA..." (Minutes of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, 1985, Grand Rapids, MI: 1985), p. 271. See Edward T. Hall's Understanding Cultural Differences, (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1990), pp. 3-31, 139-177 and Martin Gannon and Associates, Understanding Global Cultures, (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 1994), pp. 302-320, for an indepth analysis of American culture's affect on the world.

[49]Prejudice is "defined as a learned emotional response characterized by a biased or preconceived opinion of persons, events or situations." (R.K. Harrison, ed., Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics, [Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson and Son, 1992]) p. 322. Also, "Prejudice is an injury, detriment, or damage caused to a person by judgments or actions that disregard his rights; prejudice is a previous judgment, especially a judgment formed before due examination or consideration." (J.F. Childress ed., The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics, [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967]), p. 494.

[50]Allport, p. 1.

[51]Ibid., p. 13. Dr. Allport continues, "...extrinsic religious orientation--all point to a type of religion that is strictly utilitarian: useful for the self in granting safety, social standing, solace, and endorsement of one's chosen way of life. As such, it provides a congenial soil for all forms of prejudice, whether racial, national, political, or religious." (P. 25). The close association of prejudice with ethnocentrism is seen in the following: "[as the] biggest hurdle of re-education in insecure people generally, prejudice offers a high

fairness, justice and impartiality.

Closely allied with prejudice is stereotyping. These "rigid preconceptions...[held] about all people who are members of a particular group, whether it be defined along racial, religious, sexual or other lines...[are] applied to all members without regard for individual variations. The danger of stereotypes is that they are impervious to logic or experience. All incoming information is distorted to fit...[preconceived] notions..."[52] Stereotypes "remove a person from the realm of human beingness. It interprets a person too predictably...Stereotypes depersonalize."[53] They fail to take into account the uniqueness of each person God created.

This depersonalization applies to religious groups as well as individuals. "The rise of religious fanaticism...promotes paranoia and loathing around the world. A minority of Islamic extremists conjure fantasies of a New Crusade, with the entire Muslim world united in a Jihad, or Holy War, against Judeo-Christianity. On the other side, fascists in Western Europe pose as the last defenders of Christianity against a murderous Islam."[54] Reinforced by a dramatic and sensation-loving media, images, fears and negative religious stereotypes engrain these

---

degree of resistance to correction and elimination, principally because such a result should undermine the sense of superiority upon which prejudice often rests." (Harrison, p. 322).

[52]Gannon, p. 47. See also Kraft, p. 156. "A stereotype may be thought of as a technique for lumping people into a grouping for the purpose of saving oneself the time and energy that would be necessary to relate to each of them personally."

[53]Ibid., p. 156.

[54]Toffler, p. 218.

inflexible, offensive images on our minds.[55]

Sweeping generalizations "inevitably lead to erroneous conclusions."[56] Yet, human beings need "to generalize about their environment in order to operate efficiently..."[57] Only when generalizations are tentative, tempered with sensitivity, humility, and an openness to change, are they appropriate.

---

[55]See Kimball for extensive treatment of Islamic stereotypes prevalent in American culture (pp. xiii, 2, 3, 13-15, 43).

[56]Kimball, p. 34.

[57]Mead, p. 21. Cross-cultural counselors Derald and David Sue refine this distinction. Write the Sue's, we need to be aware of the "everpresent danger of overgeneralizing and stereotyping...Generalizations are necessary for us to use; without them, we would become inefficient creatures. However, they are guidelines for our behaviors, to be tentatively applied to new situations, and they should be open to change and challenge." Derald and David Sue, <u>Counseling the Culturally Different</u>, (New York: John Wiley and Son, 1990), p. 47.
The following graph, adapted from Mead's <u>International Management</u>, shows the distinction between "Fixed stereotyping vs. creative generalization."

	Fixed Stereotyping	Creative Generalization
Attitude to the other culture	Static, inflexible	Dynamic, flexible
Attitude to new experience	Selective	Explanatory
Attitude to experience that contradicts the stereotype/ generalization	Disregarded	Applied
Attitude to the stereotype/ generalization	To be protected at all costs	Always liable to modification
Attitude of the stereotype/ generalization	Received	Created

Mead's excellent resource discusses Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's six basic cultural orientations; Hall's high and low context cultures; Laurent's attitudes towards organizational power across cultures and Hofstede's research in culture in the workplace (pp. 49-80). See also David Hesselgrave's <u>Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally</u>, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), pp. 389-630.

Approach to World Religions:
Specific Cultural and Theological Perspectives

In this section, I treat cultural factors impacting world religions; dialogue; the necessity of personal theological assessment and integration; and the exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist positions as applied to world religions.

The following seven viewpoints, gleaned from religion briefings conducted by Chaplain JoAnn Knight, assist us in our treatment of religions of the world.[58]

(1) 'Old religions die hard.' If confused concerning present cultural-political-religious issues, look to the past. Nothing hangs on as long or as powerfully as religious traditions.

(2) 'Religious traditions become blended over time.' In the process of forced conversions, boundary shifts, intermarriage and the mere passage of time, adaptation does occur. Religions blend. Characteristics of a faith in one part of the world, nation or enclave may be distinctly different from that in other areas.

(3) 'Religion is never pure...the effect of culture must be added.' The impact of economic, political, nationalist, environmental and ethnic make-up strongly influences the 'flavor' of given religious tradition and expression. Be aware of distinct cultural influences applicable to the unique area of study.

---

[58]See Ch JoAnn Knight, "Analysis and Speculations: Balkan Conflict," USACHCS, ATSC-TC-SC, Ft. Monmouth, NJ 07703-5000, 18 Oct 1993, p. 2.

(4) 'Church/state separation is a distinctly American concept.' The United States Constitution guarantees the 'free exercise of religion' for all citizens. This is not the case with the majority of countries throughout the world. "Because of the degree to which we as Americans separate our spiritual lives from our private lives, we face a certain difficulty in comprehending the depths to which religions and political considerations interact in shaping the perceptions and motivations of individuals from other societies."[59]

(5) 'The Golden Rule.' "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" is our cultural norm. We believe that if we treat people decently, they will do the same in return. For a variety of factors, some religious nationalists ignore this concept. Wariness and restraint are good habits to acquire for many sensitive crisis settings.

(6) 'Live and Let Live.' Generally, we don't bother people if they don't bother us. Animosities and hatreds, cultivated over centuries, still influence religious/political activities in some parts of the world.

(7) 'Forgive and forget.' As evidenced in the Marshall Plan after World War II, the rebuilding of Panama after Operation Just Cause, and taking steps to normalized relations with the Republic of North Vietnam, Americans tend to forgive past antagonisms once hostilities cease. As seen today in Bosnia and Chechnya, this forgive/forget trait is not embraced by all nations and ethnic

---

[59]D. Johnston, p. 5. Johnston continues, "...rigorous separation of church and state in the United States has desensitized many citizens to the fact that much of the rest of the world does not operate on a similar basis." (Ibid., p. 4).

groups.

Additionally, the following three concerns--fundamentalism, violence and women--speak to the world religious domain. As related by religious analyst Mark Juergensmeyer, the term 'fundamentalist' is ineffective in describing movements within various world religion communities. Due to its pejorative, accusatory tone and imprecision, the term 'religious nationalist' carries more accurate definition.[60]

Concerning violence and religion, again Professor Juergensmeyer's words are helpful. The challenge is how "secular nationalists can live with religious nationalists and whether religious nationalism can be made compatible with secular nationalism's great virtues--tolerance, respect for human rights and freedom of expression."[61]

How do we account for violence in the name of religion? "Even though virtually all religions preach the virtues of non-violence, it is their ability to sanction violence that gives them political power..."[62] How can such sanctions exist? Gordon Allport describes rigidly held perspectives on divine revelation--seeing all other religions as threats--which lead to the legitimization of violence. The doctrine of election 'surgically divides the ins from the outs.' Then, the concept of a

---

[60]Dr. Juergensmeyer elaborates: "Fundamentalist...[implies] an intolerant, self-righteous and narrowly dogmatic religious literalism." The term anti-modernism would better "distinguish between those simply who accept modern society (moderns) and those who go further and believe in secular ideologies that dominate modern cultures." (Ibid., p. 5).

[61]Ibid., p. 8.

[62]Ibid., p. 164.

theocracy, a divinely endorsed government, with an accompanying legal code "inviolable on the pain of fierce punishment or death" has approved much bloodshed and suffering throughout its long history.[63]

The symbolism involved in religion--the cross, saber and sword--combined with the sacrificial rituals they evoke, over time promote emotions of violence and brutality.[64] These underlying religious passions can be "stoked by political demagogues and all too easily converted into a fever of violence."[65] Life becomes a cosmic struggle. All activity becomes a "great encounter between cosmic forces--an ultimate good and evil, a divine truth and falsehood."[66] Violence is justified in pursuit of more cosmic, divinely ordained ends.

Lastly, in agreement with theologian Hans Kung, most religious traditions historically have "problems with women."[67] Progress continues. Yet many theological ideals yet remain to be practiced by religions in the 'give and take' of life.

---

[63]Allport, pp. 6-10.

[64]Juergensmeyer, pp. 153-155.

[65]Toffler, p. 219.

[66]Juergensmeyer, p. 155.

[67]"You Protestants are only a little ahead of the Muslims, and the Roman Catholic Church, as we know, has a special problem with women and the priesthood. So it is possible to say we both have problems with women. All world religions have problems with women." ("He that is not against us is for us," Hans Kung, Perspectives, Feb. 1990, p. 5).

Approach to World Religions: Dialogue

> "It is those who have the deepest and most confident faith who have the courage to launch out on this adventure of the human spirit [dialogue]; and their own commitment renders them more, not less, sensitive to the commitment of others whose faith finds a different object and a different form of expression."[68]

Pastoral calling often leads to dialogue. While remaining firm in personal conviction, we talk with those of other faiths. "Dialogue, by definition, is a conversation, a process of communication...It is a reciprocal relationship in which two or more parties endeavor both to express accurately what they mean and to listen to and respect what the other person says, however different her or his perspective may be...it is a perspective, a stance, an openness."[69] Why do we engage in interreligious dialogue? What traits characterize this interaction? How do we engage in such a process?

As members of Unit Ministry Teams, many of us already are familiar with the need for dialogue. Formal and informal discussions with peers at the chaplain's school, on posts, and in units promote an atmosphere conducive to mutual understanding, education and trustful encounter. Our mandate, to ensure the free exercise of religion for soldiers and family members--

---

[68]Stephen Neill, <u>Christian Faith and Other Faiths</u> (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), p. 18.

[69]Charles Kimball, <u>Striving Together</u> (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), p. 86. Leonard Swidler (<u>Toward a Universal Theology of Religion</u> [New York: Orbis Books 1987] states three areas of interreligious, interideological dialogue: "the practical, where we collaborate to help humanity; the 'spiritual,' where we attempt to experience the partner's religion or ideology 'from within;' and the cognitive, where we seek understanding and truth." (p. 16.)

encourages us to practice dialogue on a routine basis. World-wide deployability--immersing us in cultures and religions far different from our own--prompts an immediate interest in the process of heartfelt encounter with those of other faiths.

A by-product of this approach is education and enrichment. "Reciprocal information, reciprocal discussion, and reciprocal transformation [result in] a mutual critical enlightenment, stimulation, penetration and enrichment of the various religious traditions..."[70] In dialogue, we accept the challenge to think, to articulate views succinctly and correctly. Fresh insights gained can rejuvenate faith and deepen assurance. Presentations--briefings, classes or personal encounters with others--are freed of cold dispassion, sterile-heartedness and antiseptic duty. An enlivened witness becomes ours.[71]

Credibility is the outcome. As we seek to view the world from the perspective of the 'other', taking seriously another person's most prized possession--his or her faith--we deepen mutual respect. We realize that the spiritual traditions of others are often handed down from generations past. We treat these traditions with respect. We enhance our ability to speak with intelligence and poise concerning the perspectives of those of other faiths.

Firmness within our own faith, encompassed with an attitude

---

[70]Hans Kung, <u>Christianity and World Religions</u> (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), p. xx.

[71]Paul Knitter describes this encounter/witness: "The imagination is persistently excited; new insights are born; the horizon of knowledge expands. Interreligious dialogue, like all life, is seen not as a nervous pursuit of certainty but a freeing, exciting pursuit of understanding." (as quoted in Swidler, <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 18).

of humility, ought to characterize this dialogue. The challenge-
-to maintain 'fire in the belly' for witness while remaining
sensitive, accepting and open to the perspectives of others--
requires us to be both believers and listeners.[72] Witness and
'shared encounter' characterize the approach.

A clear understanding of the presuppositions we bring to
these encounters is necessary. Only after defining and
critiquing our own underlying approach to other faiths are we
ready for intelligent and heartfelt dialogue.[73]

---

[72]Stephen Neill describes this challenge: "...his [her]
approach to the other forms of human faith must be marked by the
deepest humility. He must endeavor to meet them at their
highest, and not cheaply to score points off them by comparing
the best he knows in his own faith with their weaknesses,
weaknesses such as are present also in the Christian scheme as it
is lived out by very imperfect Christians. He must, as far as
imagination will permit, expose himself to the full force of
these other faiths in all that they have that is most convincing
and most alluring. He must rejoice in everything that they
possess of beauty and high aspiration. He must put himself to
school with them, in readiness to believe that they may have
something to teach him that he has not yet learned. He must
sympathize with their earnest efforts to relate themselves to the
needs of men in the modern world. He must listen with respectful
patience to every criticism that they have to make both of
Christian thought and Christian practice.
     All this can be done, if the Christian is really humble.
Self-assertion is always a sign of lack of inner confidence. If
the Christian has really trusted in Christ, he can open himself
without fear to any wind that blows from any quarter of the
heavens. If by chance some of those winds should blow to him
unexpected treasures, he will be convinced that Christ's
storehouses are wide enough to gather in those treasures too, in
order that in the last day nothing may be lost." <u>Christian Faith
and Other Faiths</u> (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 1984), p.
32-33.

[73]Lesslie Newbigin outlines and appraises six divergent
perspectives individual Christians bring to their understandings
of other faiths: (1) Other ideologies are wholly false. We have
nothing to learn from them. (2) Non-Christian religions are the
work of devils. Their similarities to Christianity are the
results of demonic cunning. (3) Other religions prepare the way
for Christ: the gospel fulfills them. (4) Many positive values
are in other religions. Only in Christianity are all values
found in proper balance and relationship. (5) Other faiths are

Dialogue comes in many forms, both formal and informal. When we visit temples, shrines, cathedrals and mosques, our whole senses open to the traditions observed. Discussions with others--in field settings, dining facilities, or at conferences and ministerial associations--engender growth and depth of understanding. Simply 'surfing the Internet' under religion and culture headings, or using an ecumenical world religions calendar, all sensitize us to the opinions, thoughts, beliefs and celebrations of others. Thoughtful engagement, through in-depth reading and research--in primary and secondary texts--as well is a form of dialogue.

For us there are many dangers when we do not interact--engage in dialogue--with other religions. Our competence as spiritual advisors comes into question. Simplistic notions concerning other faiths too readily get broadcast as the 'gospel truth.' Discussions with neighbors of other faiths become stilted, polemic or non-existent. Additionally, the experience of realizing the excitement of the early church--an excitement generated by expressing the faith in the distinctly pluralistic religious culture of the Greco-Roman world--is lost if we fail to engage in meaningful dialogue.

---

judged based on their progressively greater distance from the true Christian faith. (6) Non-Christian religions are the means God reaches those not yet touched by the gospel. (Lesslie Newbigin, "The Gospel Among the Religions" in <u>Mission Trends #5, Faith Meets Faith,</u> ed. G. H. Anderson and T. F. Stransky, [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981]), pp. 5-8.

Approach to World Religions: The Necessity of
Theological Integration

"Through the pressures of living and serving with
men of different church affiliations, under the pressures of
military operations, they (chaplains) embraced--perhaps
grudgingly and slowly--a toleration in matters of religion
which has become the rich fruit in our national life."[74]

"...the study of and engagement with people of other
traditions is a central priority both for Christian
theological reflection and for the practical issues
confronting all of us who share this planet."[75]

Confused and muddled thought too readily characterizes world

religion discussions. Depending on our educational/life

experiences, faith persuasions, or views on evangelism, we reason

differently concerning the teaching and study of world

religions.[76] The process of world religion discussion can be

threatening. "Genuine awareness of religious diversity coupled

with the recognition that each of us occupies only one place on a

rather large spectrum...is unsettling."[77] We do engage in

---

[74]Parker C. Thompson, <u>From Its European Antecedents to 1791:
The United States Army Chaplaincy, Vol I</u>, (Office of the Chief of
Chaplains, Department of the Army: Washington, D.C., 1978), p.
217. [75]Charles Kimball, <u>Striving Together</u> (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis
Books, 1991), p. xii. [76]See Terry C. Muck, <u>Those Other Religions In Your
Neighborhood</u> (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 1992), pages 65-74.
Muck identifies four reasons for a hesitancy to study non-
Christian religions: (1) "Principalities and Powers" (Biblical
warnings against too much involvement with worldly philosophies);
(2) "The Slippery Slope to Syncretism" (The danger of
incorporating non-Christian elements into our theology); (3)
"Economy of Resources" (Too much time is taken away from other
valuable tasks and missions of the church); (4) "Questionable
Commitment" (The perception that Christians who study other
religions have a defective, uncommitted faith).
[77]Charles Kimball, MacKay Mission Lecture, 2 OCT 1995,
Princeton Theological Seminary.

theological reflection of some type, whatever our perspective. Unfortunately, unexamined theologies result in personal thought "teetering on the brink of suicidal confusion."[78] A 'hard grappling' with the theological issues raised becomes necessary. It can be difficult.

How though, can we teach world religion classes to soldiers unless we have wrestled with the theological issues such instruction raises? How can we advise our command--and rid ourselves of stereotypes and ill-conceived baggage we carry concerning other faiths--unless we personally sort out the concepts for ourselves? How can we engage in genuine intelligent dialogue--whether with unit practitioners, neighbors in our housing areas or fellow United Nations peacekeepers--unless we think 'long and hard' about these matters?

A self-critical assessment stimulates personal growth. It becomes "increasingly difficult to slip back into a comfortable parochialism"[79] after exposure to the sincere and often conflicting loyalties present in world religions. We are freed of "simplistic, jingoistic slogans" and "pat answers" to "multidimensional theological questions."[80] We promote a trustworthy witness and demonstration of our faith, as we refine our personal attitudes and intentions. We enhance Unit Ministry Team credibility. We free ourselves of self-righteousness, overcoming a 'spiritual imperialism,' characterized by arrogance and rigidity. We lessen insecurities and fears that encounters

---

[78]Carl E. Braaten, <u>No Other Gospel</u> (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), p. 3.
[79]Kimball, p. 57.
[80]Kimball, p. 70, 58.

will lead to syncretism or relativism. We are reminded of our

own theological 'blind spots', strengths and shortcomings.

In addition, such theological reflection promotes the

genuine dialogue referred to earlier--"the mutual understanding

through respectful exchange"--where participants share and relate

"what they believe and have experienced of God's activity in

human history."[81]

This section treats three broad theological options--the

exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist schools.[82] It serves

hopefully to clarify our thought, stimulate personal growth,

refine attitudes and intentions, and promote genuine inter-

religious dialogue. At the risk of over-simplification, the

categories can assist us as we look at the theological viewpoints

present when addressing world religions.

Exclusivism

> "Exclusivism...affirms that salvation has come to
> humanity through Jesus Christ and through no other, and
> is received only by those who have explicit faith in
> him. Although certain virtues may be found among those
> who lack this faith, these are irrelevant to salvation.
> One need not and should not berate those who do not
> have faith or fail to appreciate what is good, true and
> beautiful in their lives or cultures. But the
> Christian must not confuse human virtue with that one
> thing which is needful for salvation. For the
> exclusivist, the Christian's task is what is has always
> been: to go into all the world to preach the gospel."[83]

---

[81]_Ibid._, p. 115.

[82]For these categories I am indebted to Charles Kimball
(chapter 4, "Christian Particularity and Religious Pluralism:
Biblical and Theological Options," _Striving Together_, pp. 57-84,
and John B. Cobb Jr., "Being a Transformationalist in a
Pluralistic World," _Christian Century_, 10-17 August, 1994), pp.
748-751.

[83]Cobb, p. 748.

The exclusivist position "rests on the unshakable conviction that Jesus Christ provides the only valid way to salvation."[84] The "heart of the apostolic teaching" and heart of our proclamation is that "in Jesus God has intervened in human history in a way which was both sufficient and final, for Christ had died 'once for all' (Hebrews 10:10; 9:28) for our sins, had been buried, and had risen from the grave on the third day (I Corinthians 15:3,4.)"[85] Apart from a deliberate confession of Christ, there can be no salvation.[86] The New Testament witness "to the unique and universal acts of God in Jesus," actions which "proclaim succinctly the exclusive means for human salvation,"[87] define the parameters of salvation.[88]

The "clear-cut exclusivist position...does have soft, even flexible edges" however.[89] At one edge of the spectrum, 'cocksure Christians,' characterized by "arrogance or a condescending judgmental demeanor"[90] seek salvation of the lost. On the other edge, more temperate believers, feel "we should allow people of different faiths to promote their views, respecting their right to disagree with us...fully believing that all we need is an opportunity to share what God has done in our

---

[84]Kimball, p. 71.
[85]J.N.D. Anderson, <u>Christianity and Comparative Religion</u>, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1970), p. 31.
[86]Kimball, p. 71.
[87]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 61.
[88]Key scripture texts supporting exclusivist views are John 14:5-6, "'How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Acts 4:12, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."
[89]Kimball, p. 62.
[90]Charles Kimball, MacKay Mission Lecture, 2 Oct. 1995, Princeton Theological Seminary.

lives...Our job is not to convince them of anything, but to honestly and attractively share what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit can take it from there."[91]

Exclusivists, especially of the restrictionist school (those who "restrict hope [salvation] only to people who have put their faith in Jesus Christ in this earthly life")[92] must guard against the following: (1) An "arrogance" making "quite impossible discussion and interchange."[93] This attitude of unwholesome pride, an "unfitting bondage and constriction... isolated totalitarianism"[94] promotes harsh closed-mindedness or "pigheaded bigotry" which brings disfavor to the cause of Christ.

(2) A 'bunker mentality' defined by a "callous narrowness" and "hard-line exclusivism"[95] can result which demonstrates little love for those God created. This hardened attitude too often results in a refusal to rethink almost anything and a resistance to fresh ideas."[96]

(3) A "crusader mentality" in witness can betray Biblical sensitivity and allowance for the Holy Spirit's work. As mentioned previously, the challenge is to sustain evangelistic zeal while maintaining sensitive awareness of other cultures and religions.

In treating the following evangelical practitioners of

---

[91]David K. Winter, "Religious Pluralism", LaPaz, (Westmont College: Santa Barbara, Calif., FEB 1986), p. 1
[92]Clark Pinnock, A Wideness in God's Mercy (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 1992), p. 14.
[93]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics IV:3:1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1961), p. 89.
[94]Ibid.
[95]Ibid., p. 11-12.
[96]Pinnock, p. 11.

exclusivism, I intend to show that theological subtlety, sophistication and sensitivity can characterize exclusivists.   In mentioning Karl Barth and Vatican II--Pope Paul II, I demonstrate the surprising breadth of adherents to this position.

Evangelical spokespersons within the exclusivist camp include David Hesselgrave, J.N.D. Anderson, Stephen Neill and Lesslie Newbigin.   Dr. Hesslegrave, Director of the School of World Mission and Evangelism, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, sees the great commission and proclamation of God's good news in Christ Jesus as the underlying purpose of dialogue within the world religious community.

> "Scriptural precedent clearly enjoins--and the
> Christian mission entails--interreligious dialogue that
> answers the questions and objections of unbelievers,
> proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ, and beseeches
> men to repent and believe.   Scriptural principle
> clearly precludes--and the Christian conscience
> condemns--any dialogue that compromises the gospel or
> countermands the great commission."[97]

Dr. J.N.D. Anderson, whose book <u>Christianity and Comparative Religion</u> is filled with grace and respect, details evangelical interaction with the major religions of the world.   He focuses upon the kerygma, the incarnational proclamation of Christ, as the starting-point of his study.

---

[97]David Hesselgrave, "Evangelicals and Interreligious Dialogue," <u>Mission Trends #5, Faith Meets Faith</u>, ed. G.H. Anderson and T.F. Stansky, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981) , p. 125.

"The Christian faith...cannot survive the surrender of particularity. It stands or falls with the insistence that it was God himself, in the form of a man, who trod this earth two thousand years ago and died between thieves on a cross...the deity of Jesus and efficacy of his atoning death were proved by the apostles by the fact of his resurrection...The uniqueness of the Christian faith consists in the fact that it was founded on a unique historical event."[98]

Stephen Neill, after spending much of his life in India, served as lecturer at Wycliffe College, Oxford, until his death in 1984. In his work <u>Christian Faith and Other Faiths,</u> Neill draws upon Dr. Hendrik Kraemer's words. "Christ's ambassadors...must stand in the world of non-Christian religion with downright intrepidity and radical humility."[99] We must not however, get "lost in the fog of geniality" whilst we dialogue with others. Rather, "our problem, our razor's edge, is the combination of this openness with the conviction that the message of Jesus Christ is proclamation, challenge, and judgment. We shall come to other faiths today...in the spirit of humble questioning, entitled to ask our questions, because we have first submitted ourselves to theirs."[100]

Christianity is 'event rooted' in Jesus Christ, the truth of God. Dr. Neill argues that basic convictions, a sort of 'evangelical doctrinal statement,' must be maintained if "Christianity is to be recognizably Christian."[101]

Lesslie Newbigin, former missionary bishop of the Church of South India, sees interreligious dialogue as simply "a witness, as one who has been laid hold of by Another and placed in a

---

[98]Anderson, p. 31-32.
[99]Neill, p. 285.
[100]<u>Ibid.</u>
[101]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 284.

position where I can only point to Jesus as the one who can make sense of the whole human situation which my partner and I share as fellow human beings."[102]

In a manner not unlike that of Karl Barth, Bishop Newbigin explains that this dialogue also puts us at risk, under the judgment of the cross. It means "that whenever we come with another person (Christian or not) into the presence of the cross, we are prepared to receive judgment and correction, to find that our Christianity hides within its appearance of obedience the reality of disobedience."[103]

Our witness is to "confessing Christ--incarnate, crucified, and risen--as the true light and the true life."[104] This witness, however, has a cosmic dimension. "The salvation...promised in Christ...is not to be conceived simply as the fulfillment of the personal spiritual history of each individual human being...We are fully persons only with and through others...The object to which God's purpose of grace is directed is the whole creation and the whole human family."[105]

Theologian John Braaten, professor of theology at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, is disturbed by theology which desires to speak of God without Christ, a theology having "little or nothing to do with Christ or the gospel."[106] In Professor Braaten's view, such thinking seems "to operate with the rule that the lower the Christology, the better the dialogue (with

---

[102]Newbigin, p. 10.
[103]Ibid., p. 19.
[104]Ibid., p. 4.
[105]Ibid., p. 14.
[106]Braaten, p. 1.

non-Christian religions)."[107]   As outlined in <u>No Other Gospel!</u>,

Dr. Braaten sees the Christian attitude as one of "engaged

interest", where "interreligious dialogue becomes interesting

only when we meet, converse, and try to understand and accept

each other as persons committed to the core convictions of our

respective faiths."[108]   What is the 'core conviction' Christianity

sets forth?   "...the only unique thing that Christianity has to

offer the world is its witness to Christ; and by Christ we do not

mean some anonymous Christ principle but the concrete reality and

historical person of Jesus as the Christ."[109]

Karl Barth, in <u>Church Dogmatics Vol IV:3:1</u>, (Doctrine of

Reconciliation), clearly lays out the christological significance

in saying "Jesus Christ is *the* light of life."[110]

> "To underline the 'the' is to say that He is the one
> and only light of life."   We "proclaim Jesus Christ not
> merely as One among many witnesses for the truth...nor even
> as One who occupies a privileged or even leading place among
> these witnesses...nor even as One who is normative for us
> personally...but as the one and only Witness confronting all
> men with an absolute claim to allegiance.!"[111]   "We have no
> option in the matter."[112]

This exclusivism is not ground for any "exaltation or self-

glorification" on our part however.   In submission and humility,

we as well, "allow ourselves to be confronted by Him (Christ)."[113]

In the "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-

Christian Religions" (proclaimed by Pope Paul VI, 28 October

1965), the fresh breezes of the Second Vatican Council brought

---

[107]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 9.
[108]<u>Ibid</u>., p.
[109]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 78.
[110]Barth, p.86.
[111]<u>Ibid</u>., p 89.
[112]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 90.
[113]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 96.

new understanding for the Church's relationship with non-

Christian religions.

> "The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and
> holy in these (non-Christian) religions...The Church,
> therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and
> collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried
> out with prudence and love and witness to the Christian
> faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the
> good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-
> cultural values found among these men."[114]

The Council enjoins students to be "introduced to a

knowledge of other religions which are more widespread in

individual regions, so that they may acknowledge more correctly

what truth and goodness these religions, in God's providence,

possess, and so that they may learn to refute their errors and be

able to communicate the full light of truth to those who do not

have it."[115]

What is this full light? The Church "proclaims, and ever

must proclaim Christ, 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John

14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in

whom God has reconciled all things to Himself."[116]

---

[114]_Teachings of the 2d Vatican Council_, (Westminster,
Maryland: Newman Press, 1966), p. 268-269.
[115]_Ibid._, p. 228.
[116]John Paul II, _Crossing the Threshold of Hope_, (New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), p. 80-81.

Inclusivist

"As Lexington's leading citizens gathered for the monthly meeting of the Franklin society, a new face appeared: a broad forehead, dark brown hair, and a determined look; a rather handsome but somewhat peculiar figure. He [T. J. 'Stonewall' Jackson] sat ramrod straight, his blue-gray eyes gazing ahead...The all-male Franklin Society was considering the question: Could a heathen who had never heard of Jesus Christ be saved?"[117]

"Can the Father in His Justice burn in everlasting flame...Souls that sunk in foulest squalor never knew the Father's Name?"[118]

"Because of what God did through Jesus Christ, all sincere religious seekers will be saved" is the inclusivist view.[119] "God *in Christ* redeemed the world..."[120] The central issue centers on the salvific work of Christ, a work which inclusivists say extends far beyond the parameters of the traditional Christian faith. Earnest, sincere seekers of others faiths become included.

Many theologians are hesitant to pronounce judgment on the fate of the lost.[121] What distinguishes inclusivists from others

---

[117]John Bowers, <u>Stonewall Jackson,</u> (Portrait of a Soldier), (New York: Avon Books, 1989), p. 17.
    [118]G.A. Studdert Kennedy, <u>The Sorrows of God</u> (New York: Doran, 1924) p. 89.
    [119]Terry Muck, <u>Those Other Religions In Your Neighborhood</u>, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992) p. 121.
    [120]John G. Stackhouse, "Evangelicals reconsider world religions: Betraying or affirming the tradition?", <u>Christian Century</u>, 8-15 September 1993 p. 859.
    [121]Consider the following positions of Karl Barth, Lesslie Newbigen, Carl Braaten and post Second Vatican Council thought:
    Karl Barth hints at our inability to completely know the ultimate purposes and plans of the loving Father: "There is no good reason why we should forbid ourselves, or be forbidden, openness to the possibility that in the reality of God and man in Jesus Christ there is contained much more than we might expect and therefore the supremely unexpected withdrawal of that final threat, i.e., that in the truth of this reality there might be contained the super-abundant promise of the final deliverance of all men. To be more explicit, there is no good reason why we

is their unabashed understanding and publishing of positions

which include Christ's salvific work as applied within these

other religions.   Rather than leave ground for abeyance and

suspension of judgment when considering the fate of those outside

the Christian faith, inclusivists promote and proclaim salvation

because of the ultimately redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

Questions concerning the fate of sincere religionists of other

faiths are answered--Christ's salvific work extends even to them.

---

478).

    In "The Gospel Among the Religions", Lesslie Newbigin, in response to questions concerning the will of God towards those not yet reached by the Gospel, contends that such matters are "to be left to the wise mercy of God".   In the New Testament teachings, the "emphasis is always on surprise...There will be astonishment both among the saved and among the lost (Matt. 25:31-46).   And so we are warned to judge nothing before the time (I Cor. 4:1-5) ("The Gospel Among the Religions", ed. G.H. Anderson and T.F. Stransky, <u>Mission Trends #5, Faith Meets Faith,</u> Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981) p. 9.

    Carl Braaten writes, "...we are free to waffle somewhere between reverent speculation and silent agnosticism.   This waffling implies that the salvation of those who do not believe in Christ in this lifetime is ultimately a mystery which we cannot unveil by speculation" (<u>No Other Gospel!</u>, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) pp. 80-81.

    It is in this light--possessing a sense of reverent 'suspended judgment', and not proclaiming/publicizing our speculations concerning those outside the faith, that we should read the documents of the Second Vatican Council.   When the Council says "Those who through no fault of their own, do not know Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience-- those too may achieve eternal salvation" (Austin Flannery, ed., <u>Documents of Vatican II</u>, [Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1908], p. 367 as quoted in Kimball), p. 75.

    Pope John Paul II can write: "...the Church proclaims, and is bound to proclaim that *Christ is 'the way and the truth and the life'* [Jn 14:6], in whom men must find the fullness of religious life and in whom God has reconciled everything to Himself" (<u>Crossing the Threshold of Hope</u>, [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995] p. 80.   Yet the Pope can also say, "Christ came into the world for all these peoples [systems of worship and ethical system followers].   He redeemed them all and has His own ways of reaching each of them in the present eschatological phase of salvation history" (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 83).

Key Scripture texts become I Timothy 4:10 "...we have our hope

set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people,

especially of those who believe" and Romans 1:19-20 "For what can

be known about God is plain to them...his eternal power and

divine nature...have been understood and seen through the things

he has made."

Theologian Karl Rahner is a major inclusivist proponent.

Writes Rahner: "Christianity does not simply confront the member

of an extra-Christian religion as a mere non-Christian but as

someone who can and must already be regarded in this or that

respect as an anonymous Christian..."[122] As interpreted by

Charles Kimball, Christianity remains "unique and definitive; it

is not, however, an exclusive club whose members are the only

ones able to realize salvation."[123]

Inclusivists are to be cautioned lest, in their enthusiasm

and euphoria, they lose the reality of the biblical witness and

historical tradition. Does the inclusivist view logically lead

to a universal salvation? Does it distort or weaken the

imperative for world missions?

Pluralist

"All Sincere Religious Seekers Will be Saved."[124]

The pluralist option argues "that the great religious

traditions all mediate full salvation to their believers".[125] A

---

[122]Kimball, pp. 75-76.
[123]Ibid., p. 76.
[124]Muck, p. 120.
[125]John. B. Cobb Jr., "Being a Transformationist in a
Pluralistic World", (Christian Century, 10-17 AUG, 1994), p. 748.

"variety of religious traditions should be the norm...human beings were meant to have a rich diversity of religious beliefs, and the best way to approach this diversity is as a good and healthy situation. Since no one religious tradition can possibly be true to the exclusion of others, let us just say that all religions describe truth in their own way."[126]

This thorough-going pluralism seeks to rid Christian belief of past offensive and mean attitudes: arrogant superiority, triumphalism, intolerance. All religions can work together for the common good. All are equally salvific in God's sight.

Theologian John Hick is a major proponent of this view. In the interests of modernity, Hick argues for a 'Copernican revolution' in theology, a 'paradigm shift' from a "Christianity-centered or Christ-centered model to a God-centered model giving all religions equal footing."[127] Dr. Hick uses the analogy of the Copernican revolution.

> "...In contrast to the old Ptolemaic astronomy in which the earth is the center of the solar system, with all the other heavenly bodies revolving around it,...we need to catch up to the Copernican view, which shifts the center from the earth to the sun...the traditional idea that Christ and, therefore, Christianity lie at the center of all the religions is as outdated as the geocentric Ptolemaic theory. The Copernican view would place God and not Christ at the center, with Christianity and all the religions revolving around it."[128]

Cautions directed to pluralists include: does the position throw out the theological 'baby with the bath water?' That is, in 'soft-pedaling' the uniqueness of the Christian faith, do we give up the heart and soul of our faith?

---

[126]Muck, p. 57.
[127]Braaten, p. 38.
[128]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 66.

Are we championing Western standards of tolerant thinking and widespread appeal--in direct contrast to the inherent exclusivism of many of the world's great religions--and in the process exhibiting a condescending spirit which fails to take at face value the divergent truth claims of adherents of differing religions of the world? Does such a position lead to "a debilitating skepticism and vacuous relativism that break the very links of Christian identity and apostolic continuity"?[129] How can the ecumenical vision be pursued if the source of ecumenicism--the Lord Jesus Christ--is relegated to 'one-amongst-the-many' of world religious figures? Is this accommodation a "different gospel" than that proclaimed by the New Testament Scriptures and the historic witness of the Church?

With this background, I proceed to the heart of this project, the analysis of world religions themselves.[130] In beginning with Hinduism, I outline the foundational vision for religions of the East. Buddhism and Chinese religions naturally flow from this same vision.

---

[129]Ibid., p. 67.

[130]Many of the religions of the world are not treated in this work. Class schedules, time available, and 'resident expert' factors limited which subjects received attention. See Religious Requirements and Practices, A Handbook for Chaplains, (Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, @1992).

Bibliography

Allport, Gordon W., "The Religious Context of Prejudice," The Phenomenon of Convergence and the Course of Prejudice, <u>The Edward F. Gallahue World Religions Conference on Interfaith and Intercultural Communication</u>, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, October 27-29, 1964.

Anderson, J.N.D., <u>Christianity and Comparative Religion</u>, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1974.

Ball, Edward T., <u>Understanding Cultural Differences</u>, Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1990.

Barth, Karl, <u>Church Dogmatics IV:3:1</u>, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1961.

Bowers, John, <u>Stonewall Jackson</u>, New York: Avon Books, 1989.

Boyd, Morris J., "Peace Operations: A Capstone Doctrine," <u>Military Review</u>, May-June 1995.

Braaten, Carl E., <u>No Other Gospel</u>, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Childress, J.F., ed., <u>The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics</u>, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967.

Cobb, John B., "Being a Transformationist in a Pluralistic World," <u>Christian Century</u>, 10-17 Aug, 1994.

Davis, Charles, <u>Religion and the Making of Society</u>, New York: Cambridge Press, 1994.

Field Manual 16-1, <u>Religious Support</u>, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995.

Field Manual 100-5, <u>Operations</u>, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993.

Gannon, Mark and Associates, <u>Understanding Global Cultures</u>, Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 1994.

Harrison, R.K., ed., <u>Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics</u>, Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson and Son, 1992.

Hesselgrave, David, <u>Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991.

John Paul II, <u>Crossing the Threshold of Hope</u>, New York: Knopf, 1995.

Johnston, D. ed., <u>Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft</u>, New York: Oxford Press, 1994.

Juergensmeyer, Mark, <u>The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State</u>, Berkeley, Calif: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1993.

Kennedy, G.A. Studdert, <u>The Sorrows of God</u>, New York: Doran, 1924.

Knight, JoAnn, "Analysis and Speculations: Balkan Conflict," USACHCS, ATSC-TC-SC, Ft. Monmouth, NJ 07703-5000, 18 Oct. 1993.

Kraft, Charles, <u>Christianity in Culture</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1981.

Kung, Hans, "He that is not for us is against us," <u>Perspectives</u>, Feb. 1990.

Kung, Hans, <u>Toward Dialogue</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1994.

Kung, Hans, <u>Christianity and World Religions</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993.

Mead, Richard, <u>International Management: Cross Cultural Dimensions</u>, Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1994.

Melton, J. Gordon, <u>Religious Requirements and Practices, A Handbook for Chaplains</u>, Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, @1992.

Mouw, Richard, <u>Uncommon Decency</u>, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

Muck, Terry, <u>Those Other Religions In Your Neighborhood</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992.

Neill, Stephen, <u>Christian Faith and Other Faiths</u>, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982.

Newbigin, Lesslie, "The Gospel Among the Religions," Mission Trends #5, <u>Faith Meets Faith</u>, ed., G.H. Anderson and R.F. Stransky, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981.

Nida, Eugene, <u>Customs, Culture and Christianity</u>, London: Tyndale Press, 1963.

Kimball, Charles, <u>Striving Together</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1991.

Pinnock, Clark, <u>A Wideness to God's Mercy</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992.

Reed, Lyman, <u>Preparing Missionaries for Intercultural Communication</u>, Pasadena, Calif: William Carey Library, 1985.

Ridgway, Matthew, <u>Soldier</u>, New York: Curtis Publishing, 1956.

Stackhouse, John G., "Evangelicals reconsider world religions: betraying or affirming the tradition?", <u>Christian Century</u>, 8-15 Sept., 1993.

Swindler, Leonard, <u>Toward a Universal Theology of Religion</u>, New York: Orbis Books, 1987.

<u>Teachings of the Second Vatican Council</u>, Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1966.

Thompson, Parker C. <u>From Its European Antecedents to 1791: The United States Army Chaplaincy, Vol I</u>, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army: Washington, D.C., 1978.

Toffler, Alvin and Heidi, <u>War and Anti-War</u>, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993.

Wiegley, Russell, <u>The American Way of War</u>, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973.

Winter, David, "Religious Pluralism," <u>LaPaz</u>, Westmont College: Santa Barbara, Calif., Feb, 1986.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas, "Reforming American Society," <u>Reformed Journal</u>, April 1973.

Hinduism: Outline

Hinduism Chronology

@ 6500 B.C.   -- Agriculture begins west of Indus River.

@ 3000 B.C.   -- Pastoral nomad societies in the Deccan.

@ 2200-2000   -- Harappa at its height.

@ 2000-1500   -- Decline of Indus Valley civilizations.

@ 1500-800   -- Vedic period.

@ 1500-1000   -- Continuing Indo-Aryan migrations into NW India.

@ 1200 B.C.   -- Composition of Rig Veda.

@ 900-600   -- Aranyakas, early Upanishads.

@ 600-200   -- Later Upanishads.

@ 483 B.C.   -- Traditional date for death of Siddhartha
                  Gautama, the Buddha.
@ 468 B.C.   -- Traditional date for death of Mahavita, last
                  great sage of Jainism.
400 BC-400 AD -- Composition of Mahabharata (including Bhagavad
                  Gita).
@ 327-325 BC   -- Invasion of NW India by Alexander the Great.

@ 324-285 BC   -- Mautya dynasty; Emperor Ashoka ruled 272-242.

200 BC-200 AD -- Composition of Ramayana.

@50 A.D.   -- St. Thomas to India?

@150 - 300   -- Early Dharma Shastras: Manu.

@ 300 - 500   -- Early Puranas.

@ 320 - 550   -- Gupta dynasty, India's golden age.

@ 500 - 700   -- Early Tantras.

@ 600 - 930   -- Bhakti begins in S. India.

@ 711 - 715   -- Arab Muslims invade NW India.

@ 788 - 820   -- Traditional dates for philosopher Shankara.

@ 750 - 1000   -- Later Puranas.

@ 900 - 1200 -- Great temples of Khajuraho, Tanjore, Konarak.

@ 986 - 1018 -- Muslim military actions in India.

@ 1056 - 1137 -- Traditional dates for Ramanuja.

@ 1300 - 1350 -- Muslim conquest of peninsular India.

1399   -- Destruction of Delhi by Timur (Mongols).

@ 1398 - 1448 -- Kabir, North India devotional poet.

@ 1469 - 1539 -- Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism.

1498   -- Vasco da Gama lands on west coast of India.

1526 - 1707   -- Mughal empire, Muslim emperors.

1577   -- Amritsar, Sikh holy place founded.

1542 - 1605   -- Akbar, greatest of Mughal emperors.

1608   -- British East India Company in Surat.

1653   -- Completion of Taj Mahal.

1739   -- Destruction of Delhi by Nadir Shah, king of
                 Iran.
1772 - 1833   -- Ram Mohan Roy; Brahmo Samaj founded 1828; modern
                 period.
1818   -- Beginning of British rule.

1858   -- British viceroy officially replaces Mughal rule.
                 Sepoy rebellion (1857).
1824 - 1883   -- Dayananda Sarasvati; Arya Samaj founded 1875.

1836 - 1886   -- Ramakrishna.

1838 - 1884   -- Keshah Chandra Sen.

1863 - 1902   -- Vivekananda; Ramakrishna Movement founded 1897.

1869 - 1948   -- Mohandas Gandhi.

1861 - 1941   -- Rabindranath Tagore, 1913 Nobel laureate for
                 Gitanjali.
1879 - 1951   -- Ramana Maharshi, South Indian mystic.

1885	-- Founding of Indian National Congress.
1893	-- Vivekananda at World Parliament of Religions; Vedanta societies spread to West.
1896 - 1977	-- Bhaktivedanta Swami, founder of Los Angeles based International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
1919	-- Amritsar massacre.
1947	-- British independence to India; 17 million Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs relocate. 250,000 killed in partitioning; Islamic Pakistan founded.
1948	-- Sri Lanka granted independence.
1950	-- Republic of India; Jawaharlal Nehru, first prime minister.
1966	-- Punjab (Sikh) state created.
1971	-- Bangladesh founded.
1975	-- Birendra crowned as tenth Shah ruler of Nepal, last Hindu kingdom of South Asia.
1984	-- Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar attacked by Indian Army.
1992	-- Hindus attack a Muslim mosque in Ayodhya (birthplace of Hindu god Ram).

Hinduism: Area and World View

"In religion, all other countries are paupers...India
is the only millionaire."[1]
-- Mark Twain

"How can you sort out all these patterns--family,
regional, historical--and come to a simple understanding of
the whole? The answer quite simply is: you cannot. No one
can, or has, or perhaps ever will." [2]

Hinduism is "firmly rooted in Indian soil."[3] Some 82% of

India's 854 million people are Hindu. Three-quarters of India's

population live in small towns and villages. Comprised of

fourteen major regions, with a similar number of distinct

languages, each area could be a separate country. Yet the

'transcendent Upanishadic [Hindu] vision,' in large part, serves

to unite these diverse groups.

98.6% of the world Hindu population lives in India. Other

significant locations include South Asia, South Africa, Guyana,

Surinam, Trinidad, Tobago, the United Kingdom and the United

---

[1]As quoted in Diana Eck, Darsan, Seeing the Divine Image in
India, (Chambersburg, Penn: Anima Books, 1985), p. 24.

[2]Thomas Hopkins, The Hindu Religious Tradition, (Belmont,
Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1971), p. 2. The following cautions
may provide insight into the study of Hinduism. "[Hinduism]
contains within itself so many paradoxes, anomalies and apparent
contradictions that the unwary student may, by studying only one
'Hindu' tradition, construct for himself an entirely false
picture of the nature of Indian religion." Eric Sharpe, ed.,
World Religions in Education: Hinduism, as quoted in Harold
Coward, Hindu-Christian Dialogue, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis,
1990), p. 112. "The Hindus, no less than their gods, are
difficult to pin down." Arvind Sharma, "Hinduism," in Our
Religions, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 3. You can
"[s]tudy [Hinduism] for years with the best of teachers, and when
you raise your head, nothing that they told you quite fits."
E.M. Forster, as quoted in Eck, p. 11.

[3]Ainslie Embree, The Hindu Tradition, (New York: Random
House, 1972), p. 45.

States.

I list six broad aspects of the Hindu world view--diversity,
time, tension, tolerance, monism and its religious integration
with all aspects of life.[4]

(1) **Diversity.** The following well-known story is
illustrative of the variety within Hinduism.

> "A mysterious beast appeared in the Land of the Blind.
> The king sent his courtiers to investigate. They waited
> until [the beast] was asleep and then warily touched it.
>   'It's like a wall,' said the man feeling the elephant's
> side.
>   'It's like a spear,' said the man touching the tusk.
>   '...like a fan' (the ear).
>   '...like a tree' (the leg).
>   '...like a snake' (the trunk).
>   '...like a rope' (the tail).
>   The blind men are, of course, all describing parts of
> the same thing. In the same way, the different types of
> Hinduism can sometimes seem so different as to be different
> things altogether."[5]

Within Hinduism, there are different paths to
'emancipation,' many schools of thought, and a variety of classes
and sub-classes within society at large. This vast assortment of
peoples, ideas and practices all make-up the Hindu world.

(2) **Time.** Within Hindu spirituality, time is cyclical and
of unimaginable duration. One kalpa (KAL-pah) or cycle of time
from creation to dissolution (day of Brahma), lasts 4,320,000
years. These cycles continue on for the life of Brahma (100
years of 360 Brahma days and nights). The process then, with

---

[4]I save description of the central elements of the
Upanishadic vision--samsara, karma, moksha, dharma and bhakti--
until the 'Beliefs' section of this project.

[5]Susan Meredith, <u>The Usborne Book of World Religions</u>,
(London: Usborne Publishing, 1996), p. 13.

variations, repeats itself.[6]

Time, in this sense, ultimately diminishes history to insignificance. Time "reduces to the banal all we treasure as unique. Individual biographies...are simply brief scenes in an endless drama of lives, perhaps even 'repeats' lived countless times in the past."[7]

At present we live in a Kali Yuga (KAH-lee YOO-gah) age, wherein a steady decline takes place.[8] Time is running down. 'Every day, in every way,' we do *not* get 'better and better.' Our children will not necessarily have a better life than the one we enjoy. Rather, we are all involved in the downward spiral of time.

(3) **Tension.** Rather than discard old ideas and practices, Hinduism, over its long history, has tended to put the new alongside the old, discounting neither. This "additive" logic creates a framework for tensions, contradictions and seeming ambiguities.[9] An aesthetic/ascetic, sensual/Spartan, indulgent/austere, mystical/logical tension surfaces throughout

---

[6]David Kinsley, The Sword and the Flute, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 139-141 and Hopkins, pp. 100, 101.

[7]Kinsley, p. 140.

[8]"In the Kali Yuga unrighteousness is rampant, [humankind is] weak and unable to follow their proper duties, rulers plunder their subjects, students disobey parents and teachers, pursuit of wealth is [humankind's] only concern and the world in general is a place of suffering and strife." Hopkins, p. 101.

[9]Denise and John Carmody, Ways to the Center, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993), p. 75.

the entire tradition.[10] A "love of extremes," the "tendency to press everything to its ultimate limit," promotes such tension.[11]

(4) **Tolerance.**[12] Hinduism, early in its long history, assimilated a mixture of influences. Whether from indigenous (tribal and Dravidian) peoples, Aryan (AIR-ee-an) invaders, or Indus Valley civilizations, the tradition incorporated, absorbed and developed a world and life view which remains with it today. This continued ability to implement a "hospitable predisposition to accept approaches which may differ" is an enduring strength of Hinduism.[13] Writes historian of religion Diana Eck, the "unity

---

[10]The following description gives evidence of this sensual/ascetic tension. "...there is nevertheless something powerful and, indeed, indefinable, in sensuality; something that can even agitate the souls of those who have turned away from the world to devote themselves to meditation and the search for truth...You will therefore hold that there is nothing better on this earth than doing good to others, while we shall maintain that there is nothing better than lotus-eyed, beautiful women..." (Bhartrihari, Sringara Sataka, trans. by J.M. Kennedy, in Embree, p. 165.)

[11]Kinsley, pp. 81-82. In art, this tension expresses itself in the "amazing tendency to go to the very limits of delight and terror, and even to press almost beyond them, in the representation both of the wonders of the world's sensual charm and of the hair-raising, horrifying aspects of destructive forces." Heinrich Zimmer, The Art of Indian Asia, as quoted in Kinsley, p. 82. Franklin Edgerton describes the mystical/logical tension in The Bhagavad Gita. "...the Gita makes no attempt to be logical or systematic in its philosophy. It is frankly mystical and emotional...[T]he Gita deliberately brackets two opposing views and asserts the validity of both...The Gita finds no difficulty in saying both yes and no, at the same time. For its point of view is simply unrelated to logic." Franklin Edgerton, trans. and ed., The Bhagavad Gita, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 195.

[12]Anand Amaladass, as quoted in Coward, p. 18. 'Tolerance' may be an inadequate expression, as Hinduism possesses a "more...inclusivistic tendency that accommodates other religious groups by absorbing their basic beliefs as one's own."

[13]Arvind Sharma, "Hinduism," in Arvind Sharma, ed., Our Religions, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 10.

of India...is in its cultural genius for embracing diversity, so

that diversity unites, rather than divides."[14] This sense of

acceptance stems from the tradition's ability to "admit variety

and debate into the core of [its] religious culture."[15]

(5) **Monism.** Hindu thought is monistic. That is, it sees

reality as consisting of only one single element. Dualistic

world views perceive the world in 'good/evil,' 'self/other,'

'I/world,' terms. In Hindu thought, a single notion ties all

reality together. One single principle or ground of reality

operates within the universe.[16]

---

[14]Eck, p. 24.

[15]Carmody, p. 104. We see the practical outcome of this
tolerant approach--the wide based appeal of Hinduism and the
varied, personally designed paths to 'release'--in the following:
"The almost endless variety of Indian religious experience that
is given a place in them [the Puranas] provides opportunity for
the most varied temperaments to find something congenial, thus
making it possible to bring the skeptical agnostic and the
passionate theist, the profound philosopher and the illiterate
peasant, under one encompassing roof." Embree, p. 156. "...that
each individual can find his or her golden thread in the tangled
skein of Hinduism's mass of beliefs and practices; and that
thread, though it might appear as fine as yarn, is as strong as
steel in guiding one to one's spiritual destiny." Sharma, p. 64.

[16]The Upanishadic narrative between Aruni and his newly
educated son Shvetaketu points to this sense of universal
oneness. "'Having put this salt in the water, come to me in the
morning.' He [Shvetaketu] did so. Then the father said to him:
'That salt which you put in the water last evening--please bring
it hither.' Even having looked for it, he did not find it, for
it was completely dissolved. 'Please take a sip of water from
this end,' said the father. 'How is it?' 'Salt.' 'Take a sip
from that end,' said he. 'How is it?' 'Salt.' 'Throw it away
and come to me.' Shvetaketu did so thinking to himself: 'That
salt, though un[seen], still persists in the water.' Then Aruni
said to him: 'Verily, my dear, you do not [see] Being in this
world; but it is, indeed, here only: That which is the subtle
essence--this whole world has that essence for its Self. That is
the Real. That is the Self. That art Thou, Shvetaketu.'"
Chandogya, VI in Sources of Indian Tradition, as quoted in
Embree, p. 61.

(6) **Religious Integration.** The Hindu world view knows no 'sacred/secular' dichotomy. There is "no area of belief or custom alien to religious influence."[17] Thus, one's social life, politics, and homemaking activities receive distinct spiritual attention along with worship, prayer and private devotion.

The world, as grounded in God, is also a just world. Individuals get what they deserve. This life becomes the 'soul's gymnasium, school and training field.'[18] All of living is an extension of the spiritual dimension.

Beliefs

"If one can summarize in a phrase the general intention of Indian spirituality it is to gain release (Moksha) from the bondage of Karma and Samsara, to break the bonds of finite limitations and participate in the infinite ground of reality which is imperishable."[19]

"From the unreal lead me to the real;
From darkness lead me to the light;
From death lead me to deathlessness."[20]

-- Prayer from the Brihad Aranyaka

"If I really know--then that truth destroys me. I am one with the essence of being. The goal is to truly 'Be,' to slam the ego. *Be all that you are*...not 'Be all that you can be.'"[21]

Within Hinduism, practice takes precedence over belief.

---

[17]Embree, p. viii.

[18]Huston Smith, <u>The World's Religions</u>, (New York: HarperCollins, 1986), pp. 68, 72.

[19]Kinsley, p. 143.

[20]As quoted in Embree, p. 55.

[21]Dr. Charles Ryerson, HR 345 Hinduism, Class Notes, (5 March 1995), Princeton Theological Seminary.

"How to live in society and work for a desired but distant goal"

is of primary importance.[22]   While realizing this primacy of

'orthopraxy over orthodoxy,' there are certain basic concepts

which describe the 'transcendent Uphanishadic vision.'   In this

section on beliefs, I describe these basic concepts in five key

terms--samsara, karma, moksha, dharma and bhakti--and conclude

with a discussion of selected Hindu scriptural texts.[23]

    Samsara (sahm-SAH-ruh).   This term, expressing ideas of

'flow' and 'run-around,' describes humankind's sense of despair

at the passing nature of events within this life.   In this world

of rebirth, "what is achieved in the course of one's life easily

is lost," a sense of loss that happens not once but endlessly.

The more one becomes conscious, the more one feels "the

frustrations and limitations of life."[24]

    The following two passages, one from the seventeenth

century, the other from a 1996 Pulitzer Prize winning author,

describe the sense of "ultimate pain and helplessness" explained

by samsara.[25]

---

[22]Hopkins, p. 73.   See also Coward, p. 20.   Ethics takes
priority over belief.   The line separating Hindu belief and ethic
is an indistinct one.

[23]I base discussion of these terms, in large part, on class
notes of HR 345 Hinduism.   Hindu practitioners, all over India,
agree on the general nature of all five of these terms.   They are
essential concepts for anyone who wishes to understand any of the
'religions of the East.'

[24]Charles Ryerson III, "An Immanent Transcendence," The
Princeton Seminary Bulletin, (XVI, #3, 1995), p. 319.   "The
deeper one thinks and feels, the more one finds that one is in
pain because one longs for what the phenomenal world cannot give.
This becomes genuine suffering on the deepest level."

[25]Ibid., p. 320.

"I have been harassed by the world.
I have dwelt in my mother's womb and I must enter the gate
    of the womb eight million times.
I was born a needy beggar and my life is passed under a
    stranger's power.
I am bound fast in the meshes of my past and its fated
    influence continues with me,
It puts forth its power and whirls me along.
My stomach is empty and I am never at rest.
I have no fixed course or home or village.
I have no power, O God, to end my wanderings;
My soul dances about like rice in a frying pan.
Ages have passed in this way and I do not know how many more
    await me..."[26]

"A sad fact, of course, about adult life is that you
see the very things you'll never adapt to coming toward you
on the horizon. You see them as the problems they are, you
worry...about them, you make provisions, take precautions,
fashion adjustments; you tell yourself you'll have to change
your way of doing things. Only you don't. You can't.
Somehow it's already too late. And maybe it's even worse
than that: maybe the thing you see coming from far away is
not the real thing, the thing that scares you, but its
aftermath. And what you've feared will happen has already
taken place."[27]

Karma (KAHR-muh), "deed, action, ritual, result...Any
mental, verbal, or physical action or intention...The results or
consequences of actions or intentions."[28] Karma, this moral law
of cause and effect, sees nothing as happening by chance or
accident. Individuals have personal responsibility. "Each
thought and deed delivers an unseen chisel that sculpts one's

---

[26]"The Burden of the Past," from "Tukaram" in Fraser and
Marathe, The Poems of Tukaram, pp. 114-115, as quoted in Embree,
p. 252.

[27]Richard Ford, Independence Day, as quoted in Iver
Peterson, "1996 Pulitzer Prizes Form a Snapshot Portrait of
Journalists in the Workaday World," The New York Times, (10 April
1996), p. B6, as read to HR 345 Hinduism by Dr. Ryerson @ 16
April, 1996.

[28]Jonathan Smith, ed., The HarperCollins Dictionary of
Religion, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 622.

destiny."[29]

Transmigration sees the birth of the 'soul' in successive life forms.[30] Karma directly ties into this series of rebirths. "[O]ne is not just accidentally born into a family belonging to a vocational group, one is reborn into it as a result of that universal accounting system called karma."[31]

The cause of samsaric frustration and sense of 'dis-ease' is not just the 'acts' or 'deeds' themselves but the desire, will, and sense of resolve behind those actions. "As is his desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such the action he performs; what action (karma) he performs, that he procures for himself."[32] At the base of this desire is what we often call the ego...which "always seeks to expand either its power over things or its sensuous appetites."[33]

---

[29]Huston Smith, p. 63. The Brihad Aranyada, IV:4:5-6, an early Upanishadic text, describes this cause-effect relation: "According as one acts, according as one conducts himself, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good. The doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action." Embree, p. 62.

[30]Due in part to 'New Age' popularity and misuse, the word 'reincarnation,' (another term for rebirth/transmigration) has fallen out of favor in many scholarly circles. Transmigration is expressed in this passage from the Gita II:22. "As leaving aside worn-out garments a man takes other, new ones, so leaving aside worn-out bodies to other, new ones goes the embodied (soul)." Edgerton, p. 11.

[31]Sharma, p. 25. A certain passivity also characterizes the Hindu tradition. Karma moved people to live on the border between acceptance and resignation. Acceptance is seen as a positive trait. "...life is in God's hands. Providence in the final analysis is benevolent." Resignation is a negative factor. "...[You] can't do much so it's best to detach from foolish hope and let happen what will." Carmody, p. 115.

[32]Embree, p. 62.

[33]Ryerson, "An Immanent Transcendence," p. 321.

Moksha.   Though Hindu thought most often describes moksha in terms of what it is not, 'liberation,' 'full being, consciousness, bliss' gives some sense of its meaning.[34]   From what is humankind to be liberated?   The egocentric desire described under samsara above.   "To transcend, transform, destroy, [and] kill the ego" is the aim.[35]

The search for salvation can take place along two planes. On one level, this search...

> "is related to an attempt to improve one's karma, the fruit of one's actions, in order to improve one's future existence; on another and higher level, salvation is understood as the finding of a mode of existence that is beyond the changing flux of time and circumstance.   This concept was directly linked to the ancient message of the Upanishads that there is an identity between [humankind's] spirit and the universal spirit, and that salvation consisted in an intuitive realization of this truth.   To come to this state of knowledge is to realize [humankind's] true nature."[36]

Atman (AHT-muhn), the "individual soul or life-force, eternal, indestructible...of the nature of pure being, consciousness, and bliss" is the essential nature of one's self.[37]   The "ultimate or absolute reality of the universe,"[38] brahman, (BRAH-muhn) is like atman but expanded to a universal,

---

[34]*sat* (full being) *chit* (full consciousness) *ananda* (full bliss) in Sanskrit defines moksha.   HR 345 Hinduism, 27 Feb. 1996.

[35]Ryerson, "An Immanent Transcendence," p. 321.

[36]Embree, p. 120.

[37]Smith, ed., <u>HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, p. 88.

[38]Hopkins, p. 37.

cosmic dimension.[39] Realization that 'atman = brahman = moksha' is not so much an 'existential quest' as an intuitive awareness, an 'instinctive knowledge' realizing that in 'knowing All, one becomes All.'[40]

Again, the dialogue between Aruni and his 'learned, pompous' son Shvetaketu is instructive:

> "'Bring hither a fig from there' [said Aruni]. 'Here it is, sir.' 'Break *it*.' 'It is broken, sir.' 'What do you see there?' 'These extremely fine seeds, sir.' 'Of these, please break one.' 'It is broken, sir.' 'What do you see there?' 'Nothing at all, sir.' Then he said to Shvetaketu: 'Verily, my dear, that subtle essence which you do not [see]--from that very essence, indeed, my dear, does this great fig tree thus arise. Believe me, my dear, that which is the subtle essence--this whole world has that essence for its Self; that is the Real; that is the Self; that subtle essence art thou, Shvetaketu...'"[41]

The 'subtle essence,' the Self (brahman), 'that thou art' Aruni told Shvetaketu. Emancipation (moksha...liberation) thus becomes a process of coming to an awareness of this identity of atman with brahman.[42] Few realize moksha as a continual state. Most only capture a glimpse of it here and there.[43]

---

[39][b]rahman (with a small 'b') is not to be confused with 'Brahman,' (members of the highest of Hinduism's four classes), or 'Brahma' (the creator deity of classical Hinduism).

[40]HR 345 Hinduism, 5 March 1996; and Embree, p. 64.

[41]Chandogya, as quoted in Embree, p. 64.

[42]Embree, p. 64.

[43]The following poem is instructive. "For this poem ["Tribute to the Upanishads" by Nissim Ezekiel], *moksha* is not a continuous state but an occasional glimpse of what ultimate liberation will be--a liberation toward which one strives but whose glimpse can help one survive the coils of *samsara*:

> To feel that one is Somebody
> is to drive oneself
> in a kind of hearse--
> the destination is obvious.

Various paths or disciplines are available to realize
moksha.   Each path depends on one's temperament, disposition and
position within or outside the class structure.   The intent of
these paths is to take an ordinary person on his/her own terms,
and make 'salvation' as easy as possible.   Of these paths
(margas) and disciplines (yogas), three receive great attention--
those of knowledge (gyana), duty (dharma), and devotion
(bhakti).[44]

Dharma (DAHR-muh), "that which is established...what
[humankind] ought to do" becomes the sustaining, underlying duty
which ordinary people could attain.[45]   Dharma focuses on the

---

> I don't want to be
> the skin of the fruit
> or the flesh
> or even the seed,
> which only grows into another
> wholesome fruit.
> The secret locked within the seed
> becomes my need, and so
> I shrink to the nothingness
> within the seed.
> At first it is cold,
> I shiver there,
> later comes a touch of truth,
> a ferment in the darkness,
> finally a teasing light.
> For the present, this is enough,
> that I am free
> to be the Self in me,
> which is not Somebody--
> not, at any rate,
> the mortal me,
> but the Eye of the eye
> that is trying to see.

Nissim Ezekiel, <u>Hymns in Darkness</u>, (New Delhi: Oxford University
Press, 1976), p. 41 as quoted in Ryerson, "An Immanent
Transcendence," p. 324.

[44]I discuss more fully 'duty' (Dharma) in the ethics section
of this paper, and 'devotion' (Bhakti) under the worship heading.

[45]Hopkins, p. 73.

model of how society should be organized.

   Bhakti, the path of devotion, loyalty and love, is the way which embodies the essential trait of heartfelt worship. Intense emotion, being "mad after God,"[46] devotion which is "intimate, passionate, intense and topsy-turvy"[47] characterizes the revolutionary encounters with the sacred.

   The Bhagavad Gita describes this sense of devotion.

"On Me all actions
Casting, with mind on the over-soul,
Being free from longing and from selfishness,
Fight, casting off thy fever.

Who this My doctrine constantly
Follow, such men,
Full of faith and not murmuring,
They too are freed from (the effect of) actions.

                    -- III:30,31.

Of all men of discipline, moreover,
With inner soul gone to Me
Whoso reveres Me with faith,
Him I hold the most disciplined."[48]

                    -- VI:47

   If, from a "mystical point of view, a man is as he feels; [and] if he feels united with God, he is--or at least he shall be--united with God," then Bhakti offers a practical 'salvation' path.[49] It serves as a 'safety valve' for Hindu worshipers caught up in the routine of dharmic duty or ascetic, knowledge following routes to the Holy.

   Hindu Scriptures. The following outline may help clarify

---

[46]Embree, p. 261.

[47]Kinsley, p. 65.

[48]Edgerton, pp. 21, 37.

[49]Edgerton, p. 194.

major selections and descriptions of Hindu holy writings.[50]

I. **Vedas** (VAY-duhs): 1500 - 200 B.C.[51] Aryan invaders, spreading east to the Gangetic River Plain, brought their own oral religious traditions--the early Vedas ('knowledge').
All Vedic literature is shruti, 'what is heard, the bold, revealed concepts of Brahmanic ritual and thought.'[52]
Shruti deals with eternal truths related to dharma and moksha. "[A]cceptance of Vedic authority is perhaps the sole formal test of orthodoxy in Hinduism."[53]

   1. **Samhitas**: Hymn collections.

      a. **Rig-Veda** (rig VAY-duh): 1200 B.C. A collection of 1,028 hymns focusing on mythology and prayers. These texts described a highly developed religious system, based on fire sacrifice and brahmanic ritual in implementing that sacrifice. Traditionally these texts are seen as Hinduism's most sacred ones. The Rig-Veda is divided into ten books (mandalas, 'MAHN-duh-luhs' or 'circles' of hymns).

      b. **Atharva-Veda** (uh-THAHR-vuh VAY-duh): Consists of spells and incantations, unusual rites and hymns.

      c. **Sama-Veda** (SAH-muh): Technical text identifying mantras to be chanted at various sacrifices involving soma (ritual liquor.) Most Sama-Veda verses are extracted directly from the Rig-Veda.

      d. **Yajur-Veda** (YUH-joor): Technical priestly text ('knowledge of sacrificial formulas') based on

---

[50]I adapted this outline from the following sources: HR 345 Hinduism Class Notes; Carmody, p. 89; Embree, pp. 5-8; Sharma, pp. 5, 29; Hopkins, p. 87; Coward, pp. 232-235; and Smith ed., HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, pp. 67, 88, 113, 127, 316, 675, 681, 865, 877, 929, 956, 1110, 1114, 1117, 1141.

[51]"[The] language of the Veda is 'a rhythm not composed by the intellect but heard, a Divine Word that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of the man who had previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge.'" Aurobindo Ghose as quoted in Coward, p. 231.

[52]Embree, p. 6. The text is not like the Bible or [Qur'an] however. The scriptures are "the record of truth as it was 'discovered' by the great rishis or saints of ancient times rather than revelation from God. [The intention was to] reduplicate the spiritual experience of these saints."

[53]Sharma, p. 5.

Vedic ritual.

2. **Brahmanas** (BRAH muhn-uhz): 1000 - 700 B.C. Interpretations on the meaning of older Samhita texts.

3. **Aranyakas** (uh-RUHN-yuk-kuhz): 'Forest Books' detailing ritual.

4. **Upanishads** (oo-PAH-ni-shuhdz): Outgrowth of the Aranyakas. In the 9th century B.C. Gangetic valley, upper class, non priestly intellectuals and warriors became restless about life. These individuals drifted off into the dense forests to meditate on the deep questions of life. The musings of these groups became the Upanishads, 'to sit down near.'[54] These musings were considered too sacred to write down, thus their oral nature. The last and end parts of these Upanishads (Vedanta, 'vay-DAHN-tuh,') are seen as "revelation par excellence."[55]

II. **Great Epics:** 300 B.C. - 300 A.D. All subsequent texts (except the vacanas,) are smrti (that which is remembered) literature.

1. **Mahabbarata** (mah-hah-BAH-rah-tah): A grand narrative (100,000 verses) of stories involving warriors and kings. This epic includes the Bhagavad Gita (BUH-guh-vuhd GEE-tah,) describing the poetic dialogue between Arjuna and his charioteer, Krishna. The Gita introduces bhakti devotion to Krishna. The text is like the 'New Testament' for many Hindus.

2. **Ramayana** (rah-mah-YAH-nuh): This epic (24,000 verses) exemplifies dharma and describes a formal ethic...the rule of Rama or God's kingdom on earth. The Ramayana is a key text for present day Hindu fundamentalists.

III. **Dharma Shastras/Sutras** (dahr-muh-SHAS-truhz/SOO-truhz): 150 - 300 A.D. to present. These texts contain teachings on proper conduct. They cover almost every aspect of life. The Indian legislature, through their enactment of law, now adds new smrti literature to Hindu society.[56]

IV. **Puranas** (poo-RAH-nuhs): 300 - 1000 A.D. These ancient tales "tell it like it is" concerning gods and godlike [humans].[57] They became principal scriptures for theistic Hinduism.

---

[54]Ryerson, "An Immanent Transcendence," p. 318.

[55]Sharma, p. 26.

[56]Ibid., p. 28.

[57]Ibid., p. 30.

V. **Vacanas:**   "[B]hakti poems of personal devotion to a god, often
a particular form of the god."[58]   Poet/saints authored these
texts, which are so essential in following the bhakti path.

Concerning the overall nature and importance of the Hindu
scriptures, two concepts are helpful. First, the texts
themselves do not initiate a ritual, idea or notion. Rather,
they *ratify* what is already being experienced. Secondly, "it is
the vibrating, spoken word that has power, that is heard and
remembered and transforms human consciousness."[59]   For most
Hindus, "once the direct experience of the Divine Word is
realized, the manifested forms (the words and sentences of the
Veda) are no longer needed. The Vedic words and sentences
function only as the 'ladder' to raise one to the direct,
intuitive experience of the complete Divine Word."[60]

---

[58]A.K. Ramanujan, trans., <u>Speaking of Siva</u>, (New York:
Penguin, 1973), pp. 25, 37. "The Sanskrit religious texts are
described as *sruti* and *smrti*. *Smrti* is what is remembered, what
is memorable; *sruti,* what is heard, what is received. Virasaiva
saints called their compositions *vacana,* or 'what is said.'
Vacana, as an active mode, stands in opposition to both *sruti* and
smrti: not what is heard, but what is said; not remembered or
received, but uttered here and now. To the saints, religion is
not a spectator sport, a reception, a consumption; it is an
experience of Now, a way of being. This distinction is expressed
in the language of the vacanas, the forms the vacanas take."

[59]Coward, p. 236.

[60]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 232. The following comparison with Christianity
may assist in understanding the place of scripture within
Hinduism. "Unlike Christianity with its set canon, Hindu
scripture embraces an enormous variety of texts touching upon
individual, family and public life in India and increasingly
throughout the world. Since the Hindu religion has no
institutional or church basis, these texts are the heart of Hindu
life. They provide Hindu 'religion with its substance, with its
principal assumptions, art with its themes, literature with its
topics, and music and dance with their soul.' *It is through the
speaking and hearing of scripture* that the Hindu rediscovers
eternal truth and realizes its presence in everyday life" (my
italics added).

Clergy/Leaders

"Just as a man carrying on his head a load of wood that
has caught fire would go rushing to a pond to quench the
flames, even so will the seeker of truth, scorched by the
fires of life--birth, death, self-deluding futility--go
rushing to a teacher [guru] wise to the ways of the things
that matter most."[61]

Leadership within Hinduism naturally falls on the upper two
of the three 'twice born' classes--the Brahmin priests/
intellectuals and Ksatriya warriors/administrators. Other
religious leaders--outside the class system, the ones who totally
renounce all and are seen by others to possess spiritual depth
and ability--may serve as more informal, less 'bureaucratized'
guides.

The following terms describe holy individuals who serve as
formal and informal leaders. A guru ('goo-roo,' grave or
venerable person) is a spiritual mentor and may head a sect or
order. Sadhus ('SAH-doos,' to go straight to the goal) are male
ascetics. 'Sadhvi' is the female counterpart. Swami is a title
of respect given to a religious teacher or head of a spiritual
sect/order. 'Mahatma' identifies a Brahmanic sage. Devadasi
('day-vuh-DAH-see' female servants of the deity) are women
(currently a decreasing number) dedicated to Indian temple
ritual.[62]

---

[61]H. Smith, p. 26.

[62]The above are adapted from Smith, ed., HarperCollins
Dictionary of Religion, pp. 312, 400, 952, 1037.

Ethics/Motivation

"On action alone be thy interest,
  Never on its fruits;
Let not the fruits of action be thy motive,
  Nor be thy attachment to inaction."[63]

--Bhagavad Gita II:47

"'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'--because thy neighbor is thyself; God is in both thee and thy neighbor, and both are in God. He who acts in this spirit need not fear that his acts will bind him to further existence."[64]

The close alliance within Hindu thought and practice (belief and ethics) makes it difficult to neatly categorize aspects of its ethical system. In this section, I describe the margas or paths taken to liberation; aspects of the varnashramadharma (vahrn-AHSH-rah-muh-DAHR-muh) system as a model for society; and Hindu perspectives on women and death.

The social vision of Hinduism is monistic, an 'eternal here and now' understanding. Underlying the whole system is the focus upon 'That art thou'...liberation (moksha.) The question "How can we seek liberation and still focus on the welfare of the people?" becomes primary.[65] Three paths (margas), the yogas ('YOH-guhs,' disciplines, techniques, 'yokes') of knowledge, action and devotion, mark the ways to liberation.[66] Each path,

---

[63]Edgerton, p. 14.

[64]Ibid., p. 163.

[65]HR 345 Hinduism, 9 April 1996.

[66]Huston Smith also identifies a fourth path, that of Raja Yoga. The path of psychophysical experience follows eight steps to achieve samandhi (suh-MAH-dee), an "immutable concentration in which all mental activities cease and the mind becomes totally absorbed in its object." Smith ed., HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 955.

"like spokes on a wheel," is considered on an equal par with the others.[67] Ethics becomes a matter of following the disciplines or duties involved in your chosen path, a 'living up to the system.' Also, of great importance for the underlying Hindu ethic, is the following: the "[f]irst step of every yoga involves cultivation of habits like non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, self-control, cleanliness, contentment, self-discipline and a compelling desire to reach the goal."[68]

Gyana (jnana/gnana/yana) yoga, the path of knowledge, is a difficult way, reserved for a select few. It is short, steep, and requires a rare combination of rationality and spirituality.[69] Based upon the Upanishads, it focuses upon interior knowledge and meditation.

Karma yoga, the path of works or deeds, is the model for many Hindus. Tribals are not a part of the system, nor are the dalits ('untouchables') who comprise 18-20% of India's population. Varnashramadharma describes the "particularization of social and religious duty (dharma) depending on which of the four social classes (varnas) one is born into and what stage of life (ashrama) one is in." In short, it is the model of karma yoga.

---

[67]Sharma, p. 18. It is important to realize that Hindus practice all three of these paths, just in differing degrees. Only when you talk to a person do you find out what degree of each he/she practices. HR 345 Hinduism, 2 April.

[68]H. Smith, p. 29. Truth is only true when it transforms. Renouncing the ego does not mean renouncing the world. One is freed to serve the world egolessly...which means compassionately. Ryerson, "An Immanent Transcendence," p. 322.

[69]H. Smith, p. 31.

Four classes (varnas) make up this model for the social structure.   (1) Brahmins are "priests, intellectuals, religious teachers, and guardians of spiritual values."[70]   A required twelve years of study acquaints practitioners with the ritual and practice of this class.   (2) Ksatriyas--rulers and warriors-- oversee the land or kingdom.   Eight years of study are necessary for members.   (3) Vaisyas, the merchants, control "the 'moveable wealth'--cash, agricultural produce and livestock."[71]   Vaisyas require four years of study.   (4) Sudras, the serfs accorded service positions, are "assigned mastery over nothing other than their own bodies, and sometimes not even that..."[72]

Within the varna structure, every work, movement and exercise in living out the duties of the class one was born into becomes an exercise carrying one godward.   One concentrates "fully and calmly on each duty, resisting impatience, excitement and vain attempt to do or think a half dozen things at once."[73]

In reality, rather than the varna (class) system, 'jati' (or class within a class) becomes the decisive factor in societal relations.   Hundreds to thousands of these classes within the four major varnas divide society.   Rigid adherence to prohibitions and privileges within the jati structure is the

---

[70]Smith, ed., HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 126.

[71]Ibid., p. 184.

[72]Ibid.

[73]H. Smith, p. 39.   "[E]ach...aware of the boundaries of his duties and obligations, reflected the fundamental order of the universe, and peace and prosperity in this and future existences was assured by obedience to customary laws.   The emphasis [is] on the importance of the correct fulfillment of the proper duties of one's class..."   Embree, p. 80.

present-day norm.[74]

   In considering life stages, the Hindu response to the
question 'When should I do what?' lies in contentedly practicing
the ashrama ('AHSH-ruh-muh,' four stages) of life. The ideal for
a student is to follow a dedicated regimen of ascetic and
scholarly practice under the tutorship of a guru.
Householdership becomes a key stage in the whole system.
Responsibilities to family, vocation and community occupy most of
one's attention. Then, at age sixty, when "a householder sees
his skin wrinkled and his hair growing white and sees the sons of
his sons, he may betake himself to the forest."[75] In this guilt-
free, hermit stage of 'retirement' in the forest, one seeks self-
understanding and spiritual vision. The last stage, that of
renunciation (sannyasin), describes one who "neither hates nor
loves anything," someone who lives as identified with the eternal
self.[76]

   The doctrine of the four goals of life answers the questions
'What should I do? What are legitimate things to follow?' In a
sense, these goals serve in conjunction with the stages of life
described above. Earning wealth, and economic/political
activity, defines 'artha,' the first goal. Wealth, fame and

---

   [74]H. Smith also sees a number of 'perversions' within the
varna system. Outcastes sentenced to a life of wretchedness,
intermarriage and dining prohibitions, privileges for one class
at the expense of lower groups, and the hereditary nature of the
system all go against Western perceptions of individual freedom
and autonomy (p. 55). The Carmodys see the varna system as
'sapping the vitality of many Indians...causing them to be less
likely to work hard" (p. 103).

   [75]Manu VI:2 as quoted in Hopkins, p. 82.

   [76]H. Smith, p. 50.

power are all encompassed by this term.[77] Kama (KAH-muh), the

second goal, describes pursuit of sensual pleasures, especially

those of romantic ecstacy. Cultivating aesthetic and sensual

appetites becomes the objective.[78]

The third goal, dharma, the leading of a moral life,

accentuates duty and willingness to serve.[79] The Bhagavad Gita

XVI:1-3 lists a variety of the moral imperatives to be practiced

by those schooled in dharma.

> "The Blessed One said:
> Fearlessness, purification of essence,
>   Steadfastness in the discipline of knowledge,
> Generosity, control, and religious worship,
>   Study of the Holy Word, austerities, uprightness,
>
> Harmlessness, truth, no anger,
>   Abandonment, serenity, no backbiting,
> Compassion towards creatures, no greedy desire,
>   Gentleness, modesty, no fickleness,
>
> Majesty, patience, fortitude, purity,
>   No injuriousness, no excessive pride,
> Are (the qualities) of him that to the divine lot
>   Is born, son of Bharata."[80]

The last aim, that of seeking liberation (moksha), matches

the practice found in one who reaches the final stage in life,

that of renunciation. It is a release from the constrictions of

---

[77]Yet sooner or later, one desires to experience more than a "kaleidoscope of momentary pleasures, however delectable." H. Smith, p. 13.

[78]But these are exclusive, competitive, precarious. They do not multiply when shared. The drive for success is insatiable. Ibid.

[79]"The Gita's attitude toward practical morality is characteristic of most Hindu religions. In its relation to the ultimate goal of salvation, morality is only a secondary means. It alone is never sufficient to achieve that goal. But on the other hand it leads to ever better and higher existences, and helps to prepare for final success." Edgerton, p. 183.

[80]Edgerton, p. 76.

this life.[81]

I treat the third path, the way of bhakti yoga, more fully in the 'worship' section. For purposes of morality and ethics however, bhakti is not withdrawn from the world, an escapist theistic retreat. Rather, it seeks implementation of universal virtues, and maintains a classless, egalitarian outlook.

Women. Throughout the Hindu tradition there seems to be an ambivalent attitude towards women. On the one hand, female gods--Devi, Sakti, Parvati, Durga and Kali--embody traits of energy, initiative and vitality which are active in the universe. Marriage and family are held in high esteem. Wives and mothers often are praised to excess. Even within the more negative aspects of the class system, female camaraderie, affection given by spouse, and respect bestowed wives, mothers and daughters "softened the negative potential of traditional sex roles."[82]

On the other hand, women often are seen as lustful temptresses, occasions "of sin for men who would otherwise remain chaste."[83] The lingam (phallic) symbol of Siva seems to promote an attitude of male dominance. Poor Indian women undergo the

---

[81]"It is natural that such a state should be associated with bliss; for while the waking man has no recollection of consciousness or anything else as having existed in sound sleep, still he awakes from it feeling refreshed and perhaps with a vague impression of having been in some sort of remote and happy state. At any rate...there is in this union with the One a total cessation of desires, of evil, of sorrow--in short, of ordinary, empiric, worldly existence, which is characterized by desires, evil, and sorrow. But not content with that, they [Upanishads] describe it [moksha] as a state of pure and ecstatic bliss, infinitely surpassing all human joys, indeed far exceeding the power of man to conceive it." Edgerton, p. 125.

[82]Carmody, p. 103.

[83]Embree, p. 86.

worst of burdens--poverty, 'slavery,' and general abuse.[84]

Though outlawed, the practice of sati (SUH-tee), where widows

would burn themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres, still

casts a negative shadow.[85] Also, the perception of 'females as

instruments...wards, subject to father, husbands and older sons'

is still common.[86]

Death. For Hindus, both the time of death and one's frame

of mind at that time are significant. Though great variety of

ritual takes place, the following information may be

instructive.[87]

Before death occurs, the oldest son and relatives put water

(from the Ganges River if possible) into the mouth of the dying

person. Sung devotional prayers and chanted Vedic mantras soothe

the dying and comfort the grieving.[88] At death, The Bhagavad

Gita XI:55 is recited:

---

[84]Carmody, p. 103.

[85]Ibid., p. 106.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Adapted from Kenneth Paul Kramer, The Sacred Art of Dying, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), pp. 38-40.

[88]At the time of death, the following two verses from the Gita are also instructive: VIII:10, 13, Edgerton, p. 43.

"At the time of death with unswerving thought,
  Disciplined with devotion and the power of discipline,
Making the breath to enter altogether between the eye-
    brows,
  He goes to that supreme divine Spirit."

"The single-syllable Brahman (which is) om
  Pronouncing, and meditating on Me,
Who departs, leaving the body,
  He goes to the highest goal."

> "Doing My work, intent on Me,
>   Devoted to Me, free from attachment,
> Free from enmity to all beings,
>   Who is so, goes to Me, son of Pandu."[89]

At the funeral pyre the following Vedic mantra, designed for the soul's quick release, is chanted: "Let your eye go to the Sun; your life to the wind; by the meritorious acts that you have done, go to heaven, and then [for rebirth] to the earth again; or, resort to the Waters, if you feel at home there; remain in the herbs with the bodies you propose to take."[90]

Three days after the death, the eldest son returns to the cremation site, takes the remaining bones and buries them or throws them into a river. Mourners chant mantras for ten days in honor of the deceased.[91]

Worship

> "A leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water,
>   Who presents to Me with devotion,
> That offering of devotion I
>   Accept from the devout-souled (giver)."[92]
>
>   -- _Bhagavad Gita_ IX:26

> "The central act of Hindu worship, from the point of view of the lay person, is to stand in the presence of the deity and to behold the image with one's own eyes, to see and be seen by the deity. Darsan [seeing]...reminds us that for Hindus 'worship' is not only a matter of prayers and offerings but devotional disposition of the heart."[93]

---

[89]Edgerton, p. 61.

[90]Kramer, p. 39.

[91]_Ibid_.

[92]Edgerton, p. 48.

[93]Eck, p. 3.

> "The rich
> will make temples for Siva.
> What shall I,
> a poor man,
> do?
>
> My legs are pillars,
> the body the shrine,
> the head a cupola
> of gold.
>
> Listen, O lord of the meeting rivers,
> things standing shall fall,
> but the moving ever shall stay."[94]

-- Basavanna 820

Hindu worship takes a variety of forms.[95] In this section, I select elements of bhakti devotional worship, the place of images in Hinduism, worship rituals and then comment concerning the gods themselves.

Bhakti. The popular devotional worship, centered in the bhakti path, goes directly "against the stereotype of Indian spirituality as quietistic, meditative and still."[96] Poet saints, while insisting on god's otherness, yet seek to adore him with every element of their being. Love, friendship, despair, and joy--emotional expressions of devotion--describe the feelings focused on god. "Myths, legends, symbols, rituals, images"

---

[94]A.K. Ramanujan, Speaking of Siva, (New York: Penguin, 1973), p. 19.

[95]Elements include reciting the name of the deity, singing, night vigils of prayer and song, fire sacrifices, meditation, and pilgrimage. Ritual bathing precedes most rites of worship as purity of mind and body are important prerequisites for worship. Gift giving, vows and fasts, and festivals are all grand occasions for worship. Individual prayer, however, is more prevalent than congregational forms of worship. Smith, ed., HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 450.

[96]Kinsley, p. 56.

engender such love, as does poetry of the poet saints.[97]

Devotion, as offered to the gods Krishna and Kali, presents a strong, vigorous, all-consuming passion for the holy. Krishna, with his symbolic flute, portrays the relationship of the worshiper with god as a riotous, festive, rollicking affair, filled with abandon, frenzy, and intoxicated delight.[98] With spontaneity and freedom, worshipers come openly, delighting in Krishna freely. The universe and self are filled with bliss.[99]

Kali--eerie, awesome, terrifying, wild, frantic and out of control--epitomizes the undomesticated, fearful aspects of the divine.[100] In Rudolph Otto's words, worshipers are reminded by Kali that the "holy (or sacred) is at once dangerous, frightening, and overwhelming, at once irresistibly attractive and compelling."[101] Yet, this same goddess may be 'tamed' by

---

[97]The following poem describes not only the worshiper-god relation, but approaches a further understanding of moksha ('breath inside breath.')

> "Are you looking for me? I am in the next seat.
>   My shoulder is against yours.
> You will not find me in stupas, not in Indian shrine
>   rooms, nor in synagogues, nor in cathedrals:
> not in masses, nor kirtans, not in legs winding
>   around your own neck, nor in eating nothing but
>   vegetables.
> When you really look for me, you will see me
>   instantly--
> you will find me in the tiniest house of time.
> Kabir says: Student, tell me, what is God?
> He is the breath inside the breath."

Robert Bly, The Kabir Book, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977), p. 33.

[98]Kinsley, p. 41.

[99]Ibid., pp. 9, 18, 37.

[100]Ibid., p. 82, 148.

[101]Ibid., p. 152.

simple, childlike devotion.

Images.   Images move worshipers in the direction of god[102].

They are "matchmakers whose vocation is to introduce the human

heart to what they represent but themselves are not.   It is

obtuse to confuse Hinduism's images with idolatry, and their

multiplicity with polytheism.   They are runways from which the

sense-laden human spirit can rise for its 'flight of the alone to

the Alone.'"[103]   Called visual 'theologies' and 'scriptures,'

images remind us that India is a 'seeing' culture.   The

"beautiful and sensuous, captivating and intriguing, repugnant

and puzzling" combine to both confront and delight

practitioners.[104]

In some sense a divine spirit occupies an image "for a

moment, week or forever."[105]   The primary element involved in the

worship experience, however, is faith.   In concentration on the

image, the worshiper becomes aware of the oneness of his/her

atman with the universal brahmin.   At the point of

'emancipation,' that oneness overflows into the image.[106]   Put

---

[102]Shri Ramakrishna amplifies this sense of obtaining a
larger perspective of god through the sensory dimensions.   "He
who tries to give an idea of god by mere book learning is like
the man who tries to give an idea of the city of Benares by means
of a map or a picture." Nancy Ross, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen,
(London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 11.

[103]H. Smith, p. 34.

[104]Eck, p. 10.

[105]Ibid., p. 49.

[106]"When the devotee's whole being has become pervaded by My
form, which is the inner Soul of all beings, the devotee shall,
having become completely immersed in Myself, make My presence
overflow into the image, etc., established in front of him, and

another way, a worshiper concentrates, extinguishing his/her ego.
One's own realization is the focal point. Once recognizing the
oneness of atman with brahmin, that awareness overflows to the
image.[107]

Worship is to be egoless, persistent and without ego
affirming motive. Yet, worship also serves to awaken the senses
and focus them toward the divine. It is all-encompassing.
Smells, sounds, sights, tastes and touches are all involved in
the worship experience. The term puja (POO-jah) describes the
worship of a deity (or spiritual teacher), especially centering
on veneration taking place in home shrines. Dance, prayer and
offering are principle parts of puja ritual.[108]

The 'seed' of all sacred mantra utterances, the monosyllable
which begins and ends prayers and recitations from the Vedas, is
'om' (ohm). It is a 'sound-syllable' representing the universal
brahman (Self.)[109] Whether repeated as a mantra, or symbolized in
art, decorative hanging or worship aid, as the 'soundless sound
of the universe,' Om is a central emblem of unity and peace.

In a description of how Hinduism 'works,' Arvind Sharma

---

then, with all the paraphernalia, conduct My worship." Bhagavada
Purana, as quoted in Wm Theodore de Bary, Sources of the Indian
Tradition, Vol I., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958),
p. 336.

[107]HR 345 Hinduism, 9 April 1996.

[108]For a full description of worship rite, see de Bary, p.
336; Eck, pp. 11, 46-47; and Hopkins, pp. 110-111.

[109]"I am the taste in water, son of Kunti,
        I am light in the moon and sun,
    The sacred syllable (om) in all the Vedas,
        Sound in ether, manliness in men."

        -- Bhagavad Gita VII:8, in Edgerton, p. 38.

describes the democratic, 'process' oriented nature of the
religion.   In choosing a god or gods--symbols of the 'thou art
That'--adherents are free to choose their own representatives of
the Divine.   Disciples may or may not believe in more than one
god.[110]   19th century scholar Max Muller described this as the
'henotheistic' nature of Hindu practice.   That is, worshipers can
call up a given god at a given time, without disbelieving in
other gods.[111]

Politics

> "For all beings the Beloved of the Gods desires
> security, self-control, calm of mind, and gentleness.   The
> Beloved of the Gods considers that the greatest victory is
> the victory of Righteousness."[112]

-- Emperor Ashoka's 13th Rock Edict

To discuss politics in India is to discuss Hinduism.   Writes
Mark Juergensmeyer, "In classical Hindu social thought, religious
and political dimensions of life were linked...In the twentieth
century religion and politics began to interact more directly
than they had before."[113]   In this section, I treat Sikhism, the
three main 'schools' of the Hindu Renaissance, and Mahatama
Gandhi.

---

[110]Sharma, p. 45.

[111]"Worship of one god at a time...Each of the great gods may
serve as a lens through which the whole of reality is clearly
seen." Eck, p. 26.

[112]Embree, p. 114.

[113]Mark Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War: Religious
Nationalism Confronts the Secular State, (Berkeley: University of
California Press, 1993), pp. 81-83.

Sikhism. The Sikh religion traces itself to disciples of Guru Nanak (NAHN-uhk; 1469 - 1538), who lived in the Muslim populated Punjab region of India. Nanak attempted to reconcile, through a common faith, Hindus and Muslims. A distinct religion resulted. Though many Hindus see Sikhs as "wayward members of an extended family," practitioners within the Sikh religion often feel they are a persecuted minority, squelched by the dominant Hindu majority.[114]

Sikh belief, while holding to transmigration, rejects avatars (Hindu deities which descend to earth to assist in times of great difficulty or need), class distinctions, images and the sanctity of the Vedas. Though they have no tradition of celibacy, renunciation or asceticism, their 'union with God' is the ultimate goal. The Khalsa (KHAL-sah) or Pure Order, made up of those willing to 'commit their lives unreservedly to the faith,' is open to men and women alike.[115] Not all Sikhs belong to the Khalsa. In addition to abstaining from alcohol, meat and tobacco, Khalsa members must wear "uncut hair, a comb, a sword or dagger, a steel bracelet, and undershorts."[116] The name 'Singh,'

---

[114]H. Smith, p. 75.

[115]Ibid., p. 77.

[116]Ibid. "Originally, all five of these had protective as well as symbolic sides. Together with the comb, uncut hair (typically gathered in a turban) shielded the skull while tying in with the yogic belief that uncut hair conserves vitality and draws it upward; the comb for its part symbolized cleanliness and good order. The steel bracelet provided a small shield, while at the same time 'shackling' its wearer to God as a reminder that hands should always be in God's service. Undershorts, which replaced the Indian dhoti, meant that one was always dressed for action. The dagger, now largely symbolic, was originally needed for self-defense."

(lion) is taken by all Sikh men and symbolizes courage and daring. The title Kaur (KOW-uhr; princess) is a comparable part of every woman's name.

In the 1970s and early 80s, the charismatic Sikh preacher/ politician Bhindranwale advocated a 'religion dominated politics.' Suspended by the Indian government, he retreated to Amritsar (uhm-RIT-sahr), the sacred Sikh city. On 5 June 1984, Indian soldiers entered the 'Golden Temple' within the city, and killed Bhindranwale along with some 2,000 other people. In part, current Sikh nationalism (over 3,000 people were killed in 1991 in police-radical-populace confrontations in the Punjab) stems from the issues which caused and prompted this event.[117]

The Hindu Renaissance. In the early nineteenth century, Western influence impacted Indian society. Various reactions arose in response. Whether indifference, acceptance, and critical selectivity or open hostility and rejection, these collective responses during this period are termed the 'Hindu Renaissance.' I treat three aspects of this reply to Western influence by looking at the movements of Ram Mohun Roy, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Dayananda Sarasvati.[118] The overall, positive influence of this Renaissance is seen in the following statement by Ainslie Embree.

> "Hinduism is almost certainly stronger and more vigorous today than it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the process of revival many changes took place...but the line of continuity is clear between the

---

[117]Juergensmeyer, p. 97.

[118]I adapt this treatment from HR 345 Hinduism 23 April 1996.

great ages of Hinduism and the present."[119]

The 'acceptance and reform (imitative)' movement of Ram Mohun Roy (1772 - 1833). Influenced by the deism popular during his time and his frequent contact with Christian missionaries, Ram Mohun Roy (called 'the Father of Modern India') initiated a Hindu 'deistic monotheism.' He advocated a return to the Vedas and Upanishads. The Brahmo Samaj (BRAH-moh sah-MAHJ) movement, established in 1828, still carries out the reforms and reinterpretations put forth by Roy. Devendranath Tagore (1817 - 1905) and Keshhub Chunder Sen (1838 - 1884) were two major exponents of Roy's thought.

The 'syncretism and universalism (inclusive)' movement of Sri Ramakrishna (1834 - 1886) and Swami Vivekananda (1863 - 1902.) Sri Ramakrishna (rah-muh-KRISH-nuh), made a saint after his death, extolled a devotional love for the goddess Kali. 'Mother Kali' revealed her hidden child self to those who approached her with simple, wholehearted eagerness and naivete.[120] Such uncomplicated, guileless, unsophisticated descriptions could apply to Ramkrishna himself. Swami Vivekananda (vi-vay-kah-NAHN-dah) became the foremost disciple and popularizer of Ramakrishna's thought.

At the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, Vivekananda's charisma and exposition of an inclusive Hinduism publicized and spread Hindu religion to a receptive world audience. He expounded the essential unity of all the world's

---

[119]Embree, p. 304.

[120]Kinsley, p. 123.

great religions. Within Hinduism, he propagated a view of the outcaste and needy as being 'presences of the divine.' Teaching the illiterate, feeding the hungry, and giving medicine became expressions of the love of god.[121] The founding of Vedanta (vay-DAHN-tuh) Societies--centers for the teaching of Hinduism in the United States, under the authority of the Ramakrishna Mission and Order in India--was a result of Vivekananda's work.

The 'rejection and revival (exclusive)' movement of Swami Dayananda Sarasvati (1824 - 1883). Dayananda, active in the Punjab region of Muslim and Sikh influence, promoted a fundamentalist Hindu retreat. Advocating a return to the Vedas and Upanishads, he also championed an 'against Christianity...against Islam' stance. The Arya Samaj (AHR-yuh sah-mahj) society he founded supported class structure based on character rather than birth, and opposed polygamy, dowries and sati. The Arya Samaj, embraced by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) political party, until 1988 was seen by many as 'irrelevant' to contemporary Hindu concerns.[122]

The rise of Hindu religious nationalism in the late 1980s fused the celibate saint (sadhu) manpower of the RSS with the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party). This

---

[121]Carmody, p. 101. Both Roy and Vivekananda display the influence of Christianity. The 'rousing of the Hindu social consciousness' is a real contribution Christianity made. Ibid., p. 95. The Hindu Renaissance itself displayed a trend "to make Hinduism into a religion of the book and Hindus a people of the book." This trend can most likely be attributed to Christianity as well. Ronald Neufeldt in Coward, p. 40.

[122]The historical mission of the RSS is to "train young Hindus to stand up to temptations of secular society and revive traditional Hindu values." Juergensmeyer, p. 83.

fortified BJP party sought the 'golden age of Hinduism' (Hindukva) and called for India to be a Hindu nation. Meanwhile, the Vishna Hindu Parishad (VHP or World Hindu Council), which combined various sects and sadhus intent on purification and propagation of Hindu nationalism, gained momentum by means of focus in on the issue of control of the birthplace of the god RAM. Located in Ayodhya City, under a Muslim mosque, this holy location became a symbol of government 'pandering' to minority religious groups at the expense of the Hindu majority. The recent (1991) link of the VHP with the BJP demonstrates the continuing vitality of Dayanand Sarasvati's thought over 110 years after his death.[123]

Mahatama Gandhi (1869 - 1948). Arvind Sharma describes Gandhi's continued influence as a demonstration of 'activistic Hinduism.'[124] With themes of progress and action, Gandhi merged ideals of the Hindu tradition with those of political protest. To ennoble the untouchable class, he applied to them the term 'harijan' (HAH-ree-juhn), the people of God. Ahimsa (ah-HIM-suh), "the state of not desiring harm toward others," along with satyagraha (suht-yuh-GRUH-huh) a "holding firmly to truth, the nonviolent method of social struggle and conflict resolution," characterized his involvement. "[N]onviolence, courage, faith in God, truth, ecumenism, self-sacrifice, social service, and a whole constellation of similar virtues..." summed up Gandhi's

---

[123]_Ibid._, pp. 81-88.

[124]Sharma, p. 16.

activistic Hindu approach.[125]

Socio-Economic/Culture

"[I]mages of all kinds became one of the most obvious
marks of Hinduism, with carving becoming one of the most
highly developed of the arts. The religious life of the
people was thus nourished on a visual statement unmatched,
perhaps, in the history of any civilization."[126]

Prior to discussion of Hindu art, I comment on two socio-cultural matters. Today, the jati varna (sub-class within a class) system still exerts a strong influence within society. Jati defines an Indian's identity. Though the constitution bans class based practice, jati retains a forceful, all-pervading, though subtle, influence. Also, while the modern world does challenge the Hindu world view, still Hinduism remains dynamic and robust. An educated Hindu may draw social/political concepts from the West, but in his/her "personal style of living and in the intimacy of family life [he/she maintains] the traditional values and customs."[127]

Art and Architecture. Art embodied in images is a major source of the Indian aesthetic experience. The well-known Shiva image dancing inside a hoop of flames; Genesha with elephant head and potbelly; the six-armed Kali with sword, flame, conch shell, disembodied head, and skulls; such icons are rich, not only in meaning and symbolism, but in visual appeal. The often sensual

---

[125]Smith, ed., <u>HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, pp. 33, 964.

[126]Embree, p. 119.

[127]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 275.

nature of these religious emblems and designs immerses adherents in the realm of event and feeling. Religion is not divorced from the more passionate concerns of life.

Temples exhibit a complicated, perplexing array of carvings which are crowded into most every location and surface. These worship locations visually express the samsaric tradition in which nothing is thrown out. Rather, the old is saved while the new is added on.

The plan of a temple is like a mandala (MAHN-duh-luh), a geometric cosmic diagram displaying various levels of the sacred. In exterior architecture a temple looks like a mountain. The central 'womb chamber' of the interior, however, reflects the mysterious, secretive heart of the tradition.[128]

---

[128]Eck, p. 59. Two descriptions of temple worship describe its unique nature. "The temple itself is relatively small, but its grounds include a thick, untouched forest for the sacred snakes, a shrine for the yakis or much-revered demonesses, a bathing tank, and a large field and podium for outdoor festival worship. The temple is considered to be directly linked with the main Bhagavati temple in Kotunkallur, a hundred miles to the north, and a door on the northern side is reserved for the goddess to be able to go off to the north. The temple is very popular with the poorer sections of society in this region and large crowds frequently gather for the regular worship and for healing and exorcisms with the temperamental goddess and with her snake grove and yakis as well."
    "The central feature of a Hindu temple, therefore, is the inner sanctuary of womb-room (garbhagrha) where the icon (murti) of the deity has been ritually installed. This inner shrine is usually covered by a pyramidal canopy or roof...denoting honor and eminence. Traditional Hindu temples were not constructed to accommodate congregational worship and are meant primarily for individual worship. The main purpose for visiting a temple is to obtain the sight (darsana) of the deity. Darsana, however, is much more than a physical view of the deity. It is an entry from the mundane into the presence, atmosphere and mystery of the sacred." Paul Younger and Anantanand Rambachan in Coward, pp. 193, 210.

Manners and Customs

"Therefore, with [love] and honor and with friendship
toward all and an [egalitarian] outlook, one should worship
Me, the Soul of all beings as enshrined in all
beings...Honoring them one should mentally bow to all the
beings, realizing that the Lord the Master has entered them
with an aspect of His own being."[129]

-- Bhagavata Purana III: 33,34

The namaste or traditional greeting used throughout India,
symbolically acknowledges the sense of reverence to all beings
mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana text above. With palms pressed
together, fingers up and below the chin, the gesture represents a
sacred approach to life held by Hinduism. The namaste is an
appropriate place to begin discussion of Hindu manners and
customs.

In this section, I list attitudinal perspectives helpful in
dealing with Hindu personnel; appropriate guidance concerning
greetings, gestures and eating procedures; and finally record
some general precautions of which soldiers should be aware.[130] As
an underlying principle, we must remember the value Hindus place
upon humility and self-denial. If soldiers manifest a modest and
constrained demeanor, Hindus will welcome them with grace and
appreciation. Hindu tolerance will "completely accept the fact
that you are unfamiliar with their customs and ways. There is no

---

[129]Bhagavad Purana, as quoted in de Bary, p. 332.

[130]Adapted from the following, Philip Harris and Robert
Moran, Managing Cultural Differences, (Houston, Texas: Gulf
Publishing, 1991), pp. 444-447; Roger Axtell, Gestures, (New
York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991), pp. 176-178; Roger Axtell,
Do's and Taboos Around the World, (New York: John Wiley and Sons,
1993), pp. 176-178; and Grant Skabelund, ed., Culturgrams II,
(Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995), pp. 102-104.

need to conform to Indian behavior."[131]

Overall Attitudes. When travelling to India, rather than being overwhelmed by the breadth and diversity of the culture, do not rush to judgment. "India has a great variety of languages, customs, beliefs and cultures, almost all of which are difficult for a Westerner to comprehend."[132] Give it time. Don't get caught in the mind set Mark Twain expressed when he wrote the following concerning his encounter with idols. "And what a swarm of them there is! The town is a vast museum of idols--and all of them crude, misshapen, and ugly. They flock through one's dreams at night, a wild mob of nightmares."[133] Rather, with hesitancy and caution view the civilization in its setting.[134]

* Personal contacts are important for getting business done. It is critical to know the right person in order to accomplish a task or seal a contract.

* Family and friends possess an importance far beyond what many of us are accustomed to. To 'speak one's mind' can be a sign of friendship. The role of a friend may be to 'sense' a person's need and to then do something about it.

* Astrologers are a part of the social structure. Karma dictates that nothing is accidental; rather what happens is the result of present and past action.

* When walking or travelling by bus, truck or other motor vehicle, avoid staring at individuals, especially the impoverished. Some consider this a way to add further humiliation.

* Ask permission before taking photos, or smoking cigarettes, pipes and cigars.

---

[131]Harris and Moran, p. 447.

[132]Ibid., p. 444.

[133]As quoted in Eck, p. 18.

[134]HR 345 Hinduism, 6 Feb. 1996.

* Avoid discussion of personal affairs, or matters relating to India's poverty, military expenditures and foreign aid received.

* Remember that most Hindus are religious, family oriented and philosophical people. Simplicity of material comforts and richness of spiritual depth are valued.

* "The stereotype of the Hindu gazing at his navel with his leg twisted around his neck is hopelessly out of date."[135]

* It is disrespectful to ask someone what class or jati they are from.

* When thanking someone for his assistance, do not be surprised if he says something like 'I was only doing my duty.' This duty consciousness is a central part of the dharma system.

* Well-to-do Hindus may wear long coats (sherwanis) in pattern after the old Rajahs. This attire is recognized as appropriate dress for official and ceremonial wear.

Greetings.

* Use the namaste when greeting traditional Hindus, adding a slight bow. It can also be used for saying goodbye.

* Titles such as professor, doctor, Mr., Shri (for men), Shreemati (married women), Kumari (single women), or the suffix 'ji' to a last name show respect.

Gestures.

* Strangers do not help women out of cars, boats, or planes, as the woman's husband may resent such assistance. Bold women may dance with their husbands in public. Dancing with anyone else is improper.

* Outward displays of affection in public are frowned upon. Do not expect a 'romantic love' culture like in the States. 94% of all marriages in India, including all classes and religions, are arranged.

* Near temples and other holy places, street vendors may approach you, hand outstretched, as if desiring to shake your hand. This action is often a ruse to enable them to attach a bracelet to your arm and then demand payment.

* Showing anger is usually the worst way to accomplish anything.

---

[135]Sharma, p. 11.

* Treat the head, the most sacred part of the body, with respect. Don't pat little children on the head or touch an older person's head.

* Do not point with the feet or toes.

* When someone grasps their earlobes, it expresses remorse or honesty, as a servant or subordinate would do when scolded.

* Use the chin, full hand, or thumb to point, never the single finger. The full hand is the best manner to signal attention to someone or something.

* Remove shoes before entering a temple or mosque. Keep hands off paintings or statues once inside.

* To beckon someone, the standard way is with arm extended, palm down, with a scratching motion inward with the fingers.

* Use the left hand sparingly when passing or eating.

* Be aware that orthodox Sikhs wear turbans and do not smoke, eat beef or cut their hair.

* Whistling is impolite.

* Sniffing or handling flowers at open air markets is considered impolite.

* Moisten postage stamps with water. Avoid licking stamps.

* Excessive hand gestures or talking is considered impolite.

Eating Practices.

* When invited to a Hindu home, remove immediately any garland of flowers received. This demonstrates appropriate humility.

* Hindus do not eat beef as the cow is sacred. Conscientious Hindus will consider any kind of alcoholic beverage as degrading. Muslims do not eat pork and if strict, will not drink alcohol.

* Wash hands before and after meals. Use the full right hand to pick up food, if utensils are not offered. Transfer food from the communal plate with a provided spoon, not your fingers.

* To refuse food can be an insult. Inform hosts in advance of dietary restrictions.

* Hospitality is a religious duty of the householder stage. The satisfaction of one's guest may bring wealth, reputation, long life, and merit.

General Cautions.

* Cows are sacred. Take care when driving or on field maneuvers that you do not run over or cause bovine injury. The sacred status of the cow probably comes from its symbolism. The cow represents the aspirations, traditions and strengths of the 'Indian motherland.'

* Dogs are associated with impurity--garbage and feces. If a Hindu is bitten by a dog, he/she is often disbarred from performing religious ritual.

* Describing Hindu theism as 'polytheistic' leaves one open to criticism. 'Henotheism' is a more accurate term. Also, the word 'caste,' though popular, is more accurately replaced with 'class' or 'jati.'

Terms

Ahimsa (ah-HIM-suh): The state of not desiring harm toward others.

Amritsar (uhm-RIT-sahr): The sacred Sikh city.

Aranyakas (uh-RUHN-yuk-kuhz): 'Forest Books' detailing ritual.

Artha: One of four life goals. Earning wealth, and economic/political activity, defines 'artha.' Wealth, fame and power are all encompassed by this term.

Arya Samaj (AHR-yuh sah-mahj): Society founded to support class structure based on character rather than birth.

Aryan (AIR-ee-an): Invaders from the West who pushed Dravidians to the South of India.

Ashrama (AHSH-ruh-muh): Four stages of life...student, householder, hermit, renouncer (sannyasin).

Atharva-Veda (uh-THAHR-vuh VAY-duh): Texts consisting of spells and incantations, unusual rites and hymns.

Atman (AHT-muhn): The "individual soul or life-force, eternal, indestructible...of the nature of pure being, consciousness, and bliss" is the essential nature of one's self.

Bhagavad Gita (BUH-guh-vuhd GEE-tah,): Describes the poetic dialogue between Arjuna and his charioteer, Krishna. The Gita introduces bhakti devotion to Krishna. The text is like the 'New Testament' for many Hindus.

Bhakti: The path of devotion, loyalty and love, is the way which embodies the essential trait of heartfelt worship. Intense emotion, being "mad after God," devotion which is "intimate, passionate, intense and topsy-turvy" characterizes the revolutionary encounters with the sacred.

brahman (BRAH-muhn): The "ultimate or absolute reality of the universe," is like atman but expanded to a universal, cosmic dimension.

Brahmanas (BRAH muhn-uhz): 1000 - 700 B.C. Interpretations on the meaning of older Samhita texts.

Brahmins: "Priests, intellectuals, religious teachers, and guardians of spiritual values."

Brahmo Samaj (BRAH-moh sah-MAHJ): Movement, established in 1828, which still carries out the reforms and reinterpretations put forth by Roy.

Dalits: Untouchables who comprise 18-20% of India's population.

Devadasi (day-vuh-DAH-see): Female servants of the deity. Women
(currently a decreasing number) dedicated to Indian temple
ritual.

Dharma Shastras/Sutras (dahr-muh-SHAS-truhz/SOO-truhz): 150 -
300 A.D. to present. These texts contain teachings on
proper conduct. They cover almost every aspect of life.

Dharma (DAHR-muh): (1) "That which is established...what
[humankind] ought to do" becomes the sustaining, underlying
duty which ordinary people could attain. Dharma focuses on
the model of how society should be organized. (2) The goal
of leading a moral life, accentuating duty and willingness
to serve.

Dravidian Peoples: Original, indigenous inhabitants of India.

Guru (goo-roo): Grave or venerable person, a spiritual mentor
and may head a sect or order.

Gyana: Yoga path of knowledge, a difficult way, reserved for a
select few. It is short, steep, and requires a rare
combination of rationality and spirituality.

Harijan (HAH-ree-juhn): Term meaning 'the people of God.'
Gandhi applied it to the outcastes of Indian society.

Jati: Class within a class. Hundreds to thousands of these
classes within the four major varnas divide society. Rigid
adherence to prohibitions and privileges within the jati
structure is the present-day norm.

Kali Yuga (KAH-lee YOO-gah): Present age of our world, wherein a
steady decline takes place. Time is running down.

Kalpa (KAL-pah): Cycle of time from creation to dissolution (day
of Brahma), lasts 4,320,000 years. These cycles continue on
for the life of Brahma (100 years of 360 Brahma days and
nights).

Kama (KAH-muh): One of four goals, kama describes pursuit of
sensual pleasures, especially those of romantic ecstacy.
Cultivating aesthetic and sensual appetites becomes the
objective.

Karma yoga: The path of works or deeds.

Karma (KAHR-muh), "deed, action, ritual, result...Any mental,
verbal, or physical action or intention...The results or
consequences of actions or intentions." Karma, this moral
law of cause and effect, sees nothing as happening by chance
or accident. Individuals have personal responsibility.

Kaur (KOW-uhr): Term meaning princess and taken by all Sikh women.

Khalsa (KHAL-sah): Pure Order of Sikhs, made up of those willing to 'commit their lives unreservedly to the faith,' open to men and women alike. Not all Sikhs belong to the Khalsa. In addition to abstaining from alcohol, meat and tobacco, Khalsa members must wear "uncut hair, a comb, a sword or dagger, a steel bracelet, and undershorts."

Krishna: God who, with his symbolic flute, portrays the relationship of the worshiper with god as a riotous, festive, rollicking affair, filled with abandon, frenzy, and intoxicated delight. The universe and self are filled with bliss.

Kali: Eerie, awesome, terrifying, wild, frantic and out of control goddess. She epitomizes the undomesticated, fearful aspects of the divine.

Ksatriyas: Rulers and warriors, overseers of the land or kingdom.

Mahabharata (mah-hah-BAH-rah-tah): A grand narrative (100,000 verses) of stories involving warriors and kings.

Mahatma: Identifies a Brahmanic sage.

Mandalas (MAHN-duh-luhs): Circles which describe the layout of the spiritual universe.

Mantra (MAHN-truh): Meditational device used in Hinduism and Buddhism. Denotes a sequence of sounds (meaningful or meaningless) used as a tool for meditation.

Margas: Paths (three) to liberation. Of these paths (margas) and disciplines (yogas), three receive great attention-- those of knowledge (gyana), duty (dharma), and devotion (bhakti).

Moksha: Though Hindu thought most often describes moksha in terms of what it is not, 'liberation,' 'full being, consciousness, bliss' gives some sense of its meaning. From what is humankind to be liberated? The egocentric desire. "To transcend, transform, destroy, [and] kill the ego" is the aim.

Om: The 'seed' of all sacred mantra utterances, the monosyllable which begins and ends prayers and recitations from the Vedas, is 'om' (ohm). It is a 'sound-syllable' representing the universal brahman (Self.) Whether repeated as a mantra, or symbolized in art, decorative hanging or worship aid, as the 'soundless sound of the universe,' om is a central emblem of unity and peace.

Puranas (poo-RAH-nuhs): 300 - 1000 A.D. These ancient tales "tell it like it is" concerning gods and godlike [humans]. They became principal scriptures for theistic Hinduism.

Ram Mohun Roy (1772 - 1833): Called 'the Father of Modern India' Roy initiated a Hindu 'deistic monotheism.' He advocated a return to the Vedas and Upanishads.

Ramayana (rah-mah-YAH-nuh): This epic (24,000 verses) exemplifies dharma and describes a formal ethic...the rule of Rama or God's kingdom on earth. The Ramayana is a key text for present day Hindu fundamentalists.

Rig-Veda (rig VAY-duh): 1200 B.C. A collection of 1,028 hymns focusing on mythology and prayers. These texts describe a highly developed religious system, based on fire sacrifice and brahmanic ritual in implementing that sacrifice.

Sadhus (SAH-doos): 'To go straight to the goal.' Sadhus are male ascetics. 'Sadhvi' is the female counterpart.

Sama-Veda (SAH-muh): Technical text identifying mantras to be chanted at various sacrifices involving soma (ritual liquor.)

Samandhi (suh-MAH-dee): An "immutable concentration in which all mental activities cease and the mind becomes totally absorbed in its object."

Samhitas: Vedic hymn collections.

Samsara (sahm-SAH-ruh). This term, expressing ideas of 'flow' and 'run-around,' describes humankind's sense of despair at the passing nature of events within this life.

Satyagraha (suht-yuh-GRUH-huh): A "holding firmly to truth, the nonviolent method of social struggle and conflict resolution," which characterized Gandhi's involvement.

Shruti (also spelled sruti): What is heard, what is received. The bold, received scriptures of the Indian tradition.

Sikhism. The Sikh religion traces itself to disciples of Guru Nanak (NAHN-uhk; 1469 - 1538), who lived in the Muslim populated Punjab region of India. Nanak attempted to reconcile, through a common faith, Hindus and Muslims. A distinct religion resulted.

Singh (Lion): Name taken by all Sikh men; symbolizes courage and daring.

Smrti: What is remembered, what is memorable. Commentary type text. The Indian legislature, through their enactment of law, now adds new smrti literature to Hindu society.

Sri Ramakrishna (rah-muh-KRISH-nuh): Made a saint after his
    death, extolled a devotional love for the goddess Kali.
    'Mother Kali' revealed her hidden child self to those who
    approached her with simple, wholehearted eagerness and
    naivete. Such uncomplicated, guileless, unsophisticated
    descriptions could apply to Ramakrishna himself.

Sudras: The serfs accorded service positions, who are "assigned
    mastery over nothing other than their own bodies, and
    sometimes not even that..."

Swami Vivekananda (vi-vay-kah-NAHN-dah): The foremost disciple
    and popularizer of Ramakrishna's thought.

Swami: A title of respect given to a religious teacher or head
    of a spiritual sect/order.

Transmigration: Sees the birth of the 'soul' in successive life
    forms. Karma directly ties into this series of rebirths.
    "[O]ne is not just accidentally born into a family belonging
    to a vocational group, one is reborn into it as a result of
    that universal accounting system called karma."

Upanishads (oo-PAH-ni-shuhdz): Outgrowth of the Aranyakas. In
    the 9th century B.C. Gangetic valley, upper class, non-
    priestly intellectuals and warriors became restless about
    life. These individuals drifted off into the dense forests
    to meditate on the deep questions of life. The musings of
    these groups became the Upanishads, 'to sit down near.'
    These musings were considered too sacred to write down, thus
    their oral nature.

Vacana: 'What is said.' *Vacana*, as an active mode, stands in
    opposition to both *sruti* and *smrti*: not what is heard, but
    what is said; not remembered or received, but uttered here
    and now. To the saints, religion is not a spectator sport,
    a reception, a consumption; it is an experience of Now, a
    way of being. This distinction is expressed in the language
    of the vacanas, the forms the vacanas take." "[B]hakti
    poems of personal devotion to a god, often a particular form
    of the god." Poet/saints authored these texts, which are so
    essential in following the bhakti path.

Vaisyas: Merchants who control "the 'moveable wealth'--cash,
    agricultural produce and livestock."

Varnashramadharma (vahrn-AHSH-rah-muh-DAHR-muh): Describes the
    "particularization of social and religious duty (dharma)
    depending on which of the four social classes (varnas) one
    is born into and what stage of life (ashrama) one is in."
    In short, it is the model of karma yoga.

Vedanta (vay-DAHN-tuh) Societies: Centers for the teaching of Hinduism in the United States, under the authority of the Ramakrishna Mission and Order in India, a result of Vivekananda's work.

Vedanta (vay-DAHN-tuh): The last of the Upanishads..."revelation par excellence."

Vedas (VAY-duhs): 1500 - 200 B.C. Aryan invaders, spreading east to the Gangetic River Plain, brought their own oral religious traditions--the early Vedas ('knowledge'). All Vedic literature is shruti.

Yajur-Veda (YUH-joor): Technical priestly text ('knowledge of sacrificial formulas') based on Vedic ritual.

Yogas (YOH-guhs): Disciplines, techniques, 'yokes' marking the ways to liberation. Each path, "like spokes on a wheel," is considered on an equal par with the others.

Bibliography

Axtell, Roger, <u>Do's and Taboos Around the World</u>, New York, John
     Wiley and Sons, 1993.

Axtell, Roger, <u>Gestures</u>, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991.

Bly, Robert, <u>The Kabir Book</u>, Boston: Beacon Press, 1977.

Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Ways to the Center</u>, Belmont,
     California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993.

Coward, Harold, <u>Hindu-Christian Dialogue</u>, Maryknoll, New York:
     Orbis, 1990.

de Bary, William Theodore, <u>Sources of the Indian Tradition</u>, Vol
     I., New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

Eck, Diana, <u>Darsan, Seeing the Divine Image in India</u>,
     Chambersburg, Penn: Anima Books, 1985.

Edgerton, Franklin, trans. and ed., <u>The Bhagavad Gita</u>, Cambridge,
     Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Embree, Ainslie, <u>The Hindu Tradition</u>, New York: Random House,
     1972.

Harris, Philip and Moran, Robert, <u>Managing Cultural Differences</u>,
     Houston, Texas: Gulf Publishing, 1991.

Hopkins, Thomas, <u>The Hindu Religious Tradition</u>, Belmont,
     California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1971.

Juergensmeyer, Mark, <u>The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism
     Confronts the Secular State</u>, Berkeley: University of California
     Press, 1993.

Kinsley, David, <u>The Sword and the Flute</u>, Berkeley: University of
     California Press, 1975.

Kramer, Kenneth Paul, <u>The Sacred Art of Dying</u>, New York: Paulist
     Press, 1988.

Meredith, Susan, <u>The Usborne Book of World Religions</u>, London:
     Usborne Publishing, 1996.

Peterson, Iver, "1996 Pulitzer Prizes Form a Snapshot Portrait of
     Journalists in the Workaday World," <u>The New York Times</u>, 10
     April 1996.

Ramanuhjan, A.K., Trans., <u>Speaking of Siva</u>, New York: Penguin,
     1973.

Ross, Nancy, <u>Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen</u>, London: Faber and Faber, 1966.

Ryerson, Charles, "An Immanent Transcendence," <u>The Princeton Seminary Bulletin</u>, XVI #3, 1995.

Ryerson, Charles, "HR 345 Hinduism Class Notes," Spring Semester, 1995 - 1996, Princeton Theological Seminary.

Sharma, Arvind, ed., <u>Our Religions</u>, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Skabelund, Grant, ed., <u>Culturgrams II</u>, Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995.

Smith, Huston, <u>The World's Religions</u>, New York: HarperCollins, 1986.

Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Buddhism: Outline

Buddhism Chronology

566 - 486 B.C.   -- Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha.

486   -- Buddha enters nirvana, beginning of Buddhist
                     era.

ca. 268 - 239   -- Reign of Ashoka.

ca. 251   -- First Buddhist missionary activity outside
                     India.

65 A.D.   -- Entry of Buddhism into China.

2nd Century   -- Asvaghosha, Nagarjuna and Lotus Sutra.

100 - 150   -- Rise of Mahayana Buddhism.

4th - 5th Cent   -- Buddhaghosa.

ca. 360 - 434   -- Tao-sheng.

d. 532?   -- Bodhidharma.

538 or 552   -- Korean Buddhism enters Japan.

589 - 906   -- 'Golden Age' of Chinese Buddhism.

7th Century   -- Beginning of Chan (Zen) Buddhism.

ca. 606 - 706   -- Shen-hsiu.

658 - 666   -- Chinese Buddhism enters Japan.

668 - 935   -- Classical period of Korean Buddhism.

684 - 758   -- Shen-hui.

802 - 1432   -- Angkorean period (Cambodia), major construction
                     of temple complexes.

805   -- Founding of Tendai Buddhism in Japan.

806   -- Founding of Shingon Buddhism in Japan.

11th Century   -- Beginning of influence of Buddhism in Central
                     Asia, continuing to present.

11th - 15th C.   -- Classical period of Southeast Asian Buddhism.

12th Century   -- Shariputta.

1133 - 1212	-- Honen.
1173 - 1262	-- Shinran.
1175	-- Founding of Japanese Pure Land (Jodo) Buddhism by Honen.
1191	-- Rinzai Zen transmitted from China to Japan.
1224	-- Jodo Sin (True Pure Land) founded in Japan by Shinran.
1391 - 1475	-- Dalai Lama I.
1854 - 1883	-- Peak period Chinese immigration into the U.S., beginning of American Buddhist 'churches.'
1868 - 1907	-- Peak period Japanese immigration into U.S., 2nd wave of American Buddhist 'churches.'
1871	-- Fifth Buddhist Council (Mandalay).
1891	-- Mahi Bodi Society (Sri Lanka).
1907 -	-- U Nu.
1922 -	-- Norodom Sihanouk.
1950	-- World Fellowship of Buddhists founded.
1954 - 1956	-- Sixth Buddhist Council (Rangoon).
1956	-- 2,500-year anniversary of founding of Buddhism.
1989	-- Dalai Lama XIV receives Nobel Peace Prize.

Areas of the Religion

Buddhism originated in northern India under the leadership of Siddhartha Gautama (566 - 486 B.C.), known as the first Buddha. Under Emperor Ashoka, Buddhist teaching and practice entered Sri Lanka (third century B.C.) and other parts of Southeast Asia. Monks carried the religion to China in the second century, Korea in the fourth century and to Japan and Tibet in the seventh century. Within the past two centuries, Europe and North America have felt the influence of the Buddhist tradition.[1] Over half of the world's population live in areas where Buddhism has been, or is now, the dominant practice.[2]

Theravada (thai-ruh-VAH-duh)[3] practice, is the most conservative, traditional school of Buddhism. Also called the 'southern' social movement, this tradition goes back to one of the original eighteen schools--the tradition of the elders. Hinayana ('hin-ah-YAH-nah,' lesser), a pejorative term, sometimes describes Theravada. "The term (Hinayana) should be avoided except in citations of polemical writings."[4] Southeast Asia--

---

[1]Jonathan Smith, ed., HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 135.

[2]Joanne O'Brien and Martin Palmer, eds., The State of Religion Atlas, (New York: Touchstone, 1993), p. 27.

[3]I use the pronunciation key followed by HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995). For pronunciation guidance to Pali and Sanskrit terms not 'keyed' in this paper, see An Introduction to Buddhism by Peter Harvey, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), pp. xx-xxii.

[4]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, Jonathan Smith, ed., (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 419.

specifically the countries of Myanmar,[5] Thailand,[6] Laos,

Kampuchea--and Sri Lanka[7] are home to this practice.

Mahayana (mah-hah-YAH-nah), which means the 'great vehicle

or course,' is associated with Tibet,[8] Mongolia, China, Korea,

Japan[9] and Vietnam. Also called northern Buddhism, it includes

---

[5]"...85 per cent follow Theravada Buddhism. There is a monastery in most villages, and nearly all male Burmese spend some amount of their lifetime in a monastery. Some elements of traditional primal religions have been incorporated into Theravada Buddhism...The Sanga...has been the dominant force in opposing military rule, and the government has tried to regain their support by building a new pagoda. Monks have been prominent in popular uprisings against the government in recent times..." (Ian Harris, Stuart Mews, Paul Morris, John Shepherd, eds., Contemporary Religions A World Guide, (Harlow, Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1992), p. 445.

[6]"The population of Thailand...is mainly composed of Buddhists (92 per cent)....Although Theravada Buddhism plays a minimal overt role in national politics, it is the religion of the state according to the constitution of 1968...At present there are some 200,000 monks located in 24,000 monasteries throughout the kingdom. At any one time a significant number of lay Buddhists (80,000) will be temporary monastic residents...In recognition of the long-standing nature of Thai Buddhist culture, Bangkok is the headquarters of the World Fellowship of Buddhists." Ibid., p. 473.

[7]"Sixty-nine per cent of the population, the Sinhalese, are Theravada Buddhists, as Buddhism has been present here since the 3rd century BCE. There are about 6,000 monasteries, 17,000 monks, and 14,000 novices distributed between the three monastic fraternities...Theravada missionaries are trained and sent elsewhere, and social action and development is stressed...Monks often sympathize with the Sinhalese People's Liberation Front, which is opposed to the government." Ibid., p. 467.

[8]"[In India there] are also some 80,000 Tibetan Buddhists living in exile with their leader, the Dalai Lama." Ibid., p. 422.

[9]"Buddhism...has predominated since its entry from China in the seventh and eighth centuries. Buddhism is generally of the Mahayana variety, but may be divided into a number of widely differing sects. Tendaishu was once the dominant sect, but now has about 5,000,000 adherents and over 4,000 temples. Another ancient ascetic sect is Shingonshu, a Tantric religion, which has about 12,000,000 followers and 12,000 temples. Its centre is the small city Koya-San, which has a university of Buddhism. Zen,

the Pure Land, Ch'an (chahn) and Tantra (TUHN-truh) trends of

thought.

Clergy/Leadership

"...in South-east Asia, a monk does not 'eat food,' but 'glorifies alms-food.'[10]

"'It may be, Ananda, that some of you will think, 'The word of The Teacher is a thing of the past; we have now no Teacher.' But that, Ananda, is not the correct view. The Doctrine and Discipline, Ananda, which I have taught and enjoined upon you is to be your teacher when I am gone.'"[11]

The 'elite corps'--the teachers of Doctrine and

practitioners of Discipline--of Buddhist practice is the Sangha

(SAHN-guh). Estimated as "probably the most numerous clergy in

the world,"[12] these monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen are the

"very heart of religious life and the most important unifying

element throughout the Buddhist world."[13] This unity and

stability, tying together the various strands of Buddhist

---

which has developed from Chinese Ch'an Buddhism, is divided into the three main schools of Rinzai, Soto, and Obaku, and together these have about 10,000,000 followers and 20,000 temples. Zen has had a significant impact upon Japanese culture, arts, gardens, and tea ceremonies, and is now popular largely due to its emphasis upon meditation. Jodoshu, with a reformed wing Jodoshinshu, is a version of Pure Land Buddhism which hopes for salvation through the Buddha Amida. It has a wide popular appeal, with perhaps 21,000,000 adherents and 30,000 temples, and has a university, Bukkyo Daigaku. The Nichirenshu sect, which dates back to the 13th century, is concerned with austerity and social justice. It is also popular with the poorer classes and has about 13,000,000 adherents and 6,000 temples." Ibid., p. 430.

[10]Harvey, p. 218.

[11]"Buddha-Karita" in Stryk, p. 44.

[12]Harvey, p. 217.

[13]Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. II, ed. Mircea Eliade, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 440.

practice throughout its 2500 year history, is due, in part, to the constancy of the Vinaya ('VI-nuh-yuh', monastic discipline), and the Patimokkha (monastic rules.)[14]

Masao Abe, in the book Our Religions, celebrating the 1993 World Parliament of Religion in Chicago, writes of the importance of the Sangha. "So long as the Sangha functions, Buddhism works; when the Sangha falls, Buddhism collapses."[15] Gautama (GOW-tuh-muh) Buddha (BOO-duh) appointed no personal successor before his death. The Dharma ('DAHR-muh', doctrine) and Vinaya carried on by a self-reliant Sangha, would fulfill the leadership role.

Young boys in the Theravada movement take the novice vows at age seven or eight. They pledge to honor the full ten precepts. They may stay a few days, months or continue until age twenty or higher. At vow ceremonies, shaved heads symbolize the renunciation of vanity. The higher ordination or 'admission' into the Sangha involves at least five ordained monks. A senior monk usually takes a novice or new monk under his care, patterned after the father--son relationship. An additional 217 training rules become the practice for fully ordained monks.[16] Monastic discipline (Vinaya) regulates monastic life. Training rules and communal ordinances comprise this discipline.

Monastic robes--"orange, yellow or orangy-brown in Southern Buddhism; russet-red in Northern Buddhism; usually grey in China

---

[14]Abe in Sharma, p. 124. "Some say the 'continuity of the monastic organization has been the only constant factor in Buddhist history.'" Ibid., p. 125.

[15]Ibid., p. 124.

[16]See Harvey p. 220-221 and Abe in Sharma, p. 87.

and Korea, and generally black in Japan"[17]--identify Sangha

members. The alms-bowl makes up another outward sign of the

monk, nun or novice.

Why become a monk or nun? Religious motives undoubtably are

a great factor. Some desire an escape from the difficulties of

life. Still others see the Sangha as an 'easy life'. In rural

areas the promise of education is also a motive.[18]

Though the 'Middle Way' guides all Buddhist practice, to the

outsider the discipline can appear austere. Some Zen monks rise

as early as 0300 for meditation. A verse they recite for

mealtimes is:

> "The first bite is to discard evil; the second bite is
> so that we may train in perfection; the third bite is to
> help all beings; we pray that all may be enlightened. We
> must think deeply of the ways and means by which this food
> has come. We must consider our merit when accepting it. We
> must protect ourselves from error by excluding greed from
> our minds. We will eat lest we become lean and die. We
> accept this food so that we may become enlightened."[19]

The Sangha provides laity with a tangible means for merit.

Support given to monks or nuns increases possibilities for better

rebirth. The better the monk, the better the merit. Also, to

the laity, the Sangha--who actively follow the Noble Eightfold

Path--sets an ideal and standard of the highest order.

In Southeast Asia, monasteries provide a wide variety of

---

[17]Harvey, p. 220.

[18]Spiro, p. 322. Dr. Spiro also discovered what he termed
'unconscious motives for joining': 'need for dependency (be taken
care of/nurtured by others), thus avoiding responsibility;
emotional timidity; and narcissism (own salvation) regardless of
consequence to others.' Ibid.

[19]Roshi Jiyu Kennett, Zen is Eternal Life, pp. 299-300, as
quoted in Harvey, p. 239.

helpful services for villagers. The Sangha abbot is often the
most respected and influential person in a village, sought out
for advice and wisdom. Temple grounds may provide free
accommodation to travelers; old age security to those entering
the ordination later in life; shelter for the homeless and sick;
support for boys studying or too poor to be supported by their
families; libraries, schools and education centers; and, medical
care, be it herbal, folk, or conventional.[20]

Belief

> "As the great ocean has but one flavor, the taste of
> salt, so does the Doctrine and the Discipline of the Buddha
> have but one flavor--the flavor of emancipation."[21]

Belief--the acceptance of the truth of a body of facts
without having absolute proof, a 'way of thinking about
something'--is not the critical emphasis in Buddhism. Practice,
commitment, 'dedication in achieving' is important. The quest
for liberation, salvation, the following of the 'path' leading to
emancipation, are concerns central to Buddhism.[22]

In this section, I look at historical trends of thought

---

[20]Harvey, p. 240. There is no consensus on the extent of
this social involvement amongst individual Sanghas.

[21]Anguttara-Nikaya, VIII.II.ix, as quoted by Masao
Abe, "Buddhism," in Our Religions, Arvind Sharma, ed., (San
Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 72.

[22]"...in spite of all this diversity we must not lose sight
of the basic and recognizable identity of Buddhism: a doctrine of
salvation, aimed at the acquisition of liberating insight and at
the complete extinction of attachment, and, consequently, of
continued rebirth in the world of suffering." (Eric Zurcher in
Mircea Eliade, ed., The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 2, (New
York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987), p. 440.

associated with Buddhist practice, first describing useful

perspectives and terms, then outlining convictions held within

the Theravada, Mahayana, Pure Land, Ch'an and Tantra movements.[23]

By design, Buddhism is a diverse practice. Gautama Buddha

encouraged decentralization.[24] There is no 'official' Buddhist

language. No central hierarchy governs all. The languages of

the people, of whatever culture or nationality, become the

languages of Buddhist expression. The long history of Buddhism

(@2,500 years), and the proliferation of its doctrine and

scripture from the very start, contribute as well to this

diversity.

Though Buddhism possesses nothing similar to a <u>Bible</u> or

<u>Qur'an</u>, it does have authoritative sacred texts.[25] The Pali

(pah-lee) canon, the oldest grouping, forms the basis of

Theravada and subsequent movements.[26] Chinese teachings, which

---

[23]Buddhism is a very rational, logical practice. Illogical, inconsistent, 'in the clouds...zoning out' methods are foreign to historic and contemporary serious practice. "It is mysticism in the sense that it strives for intuitive realization of the oneness of the universe, yet its feet are firmly based on a cold, dispassionate reasoning from observed first premises...All these teachings...show the same cool level of exposition. There is here no rhetoric, no deliberate appeal to the emotions; only the serene unfolding of a set of truths by which each man might find the way to his own Deliverance." (Christmas Humphreys, <u>Buddhism</u>, (London: Penguin, 1969), pp. 129, 236.

[24]"Almost always, almost everywhere, [Buddhists] have attempted to assimilate into the surrounding culture. [There is a] merging of Buddhism with the local culture." (Lecture notes, Dr. Teiser, REL 225, "The Buddhist World of Thought and Practice", 18 Sept. 1995, Princeton University).

[25]If combined, these texts could form writings some eighty times the length of an Old and New Testament Bible.

[26]I feel a similar frustration as that expressed by author Melford Spiro, "to summarize the main doctrines of normative Buddhism in one brief chapter is not only presumptuous, but since

preserve translations of texts originally composed in the
Sanskrit language, elaborate further Mahayana practice. The
Tibetan canon is foundational for the Tantric trend.

Definitions of the following concepts, central to Buddhism's
world and life view, aid our understanding. Samsara (sahm-SAH-
ruh), a Sanskrit term, refers to the cycle of rebirth and
redeath--a turning around continually--experienced by all life.
Karma (KAHR-muh), 'action/intention/deed,' forms the basis for
the law of karma--'every action, every deed, has a result'--both
in the short term and over the long haul.[27] Nirvana (nihr-VAH-
nuh), a term difficult to translate, means something akin to
"unalloyed bliss, pure and simple;"[28] "'fully passed away,'
'fully blown out' or 'fully extinct.'"[29] Anatman, "devoid of
self...[indicates] the Buddhist view that everything is transient
and insubstantial, being without underlying reality
or...continuing substrate."[30] The Sangha are specialists in the
spiritual life. These monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen,

Buddhism is a luxuriant forest, it is almost impossible to
identify all the main paths by which it might be traversed."
Buddhism and Society, by Melford Spiro, (Berkeley: Univ. of
Calif. Press, 1982), p. 31.

[27]Notes, Dr. Teiser, 20 Sept. 1995.

[28]"Questions of Milinda," in World of the Buddha, ed.,
Lucien Stryk, (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1968) p. 110.

[29]Walpola Sri Rahula, What the Buddha Taught, (New York:
Grove Press, 1974), p. 41. See also "Buddha-Karita", "When the
fire of lust is extinct, that is Nirvana; when the fires of
hatred and infatuation are extinct, that is Nirvana; when pride,
false belief, and all other passions and torments are extinct,
that is Nirvana." Stryk, p. 28.

[30]Richard Robinson and Willard Johnson, The Buddhist
Religion, (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1982), p. 237.

follow rules of the codified monastic discipline (Vinaya).

Many names identify the historical Buddha. Sakyamuni refers to Buddha's clan (his being a 'sage of the Sakya clan'). Gautama is his family name; Siddhartha (sid-HAHR-tah) his personal name. Born to the warrior (ksatriya) class, at birth Buddha was "shown as if he had come down from heaven...born full of wisdom, not foolish,--as if his mind had been purified by countless aeons of contemplation."[31] While a young man, he saw four sights--an old man, a sick man, a corpse and a wandering ascetic--which prompted Gautama to retire from the world, undergo the great struggle, and attain enlightenment. The title 'Buddha,' meaning 'enlightened, awakened one,' refers to those "attaining the goal of the Buddhist religious life."[32]

Theravada practice centers on the original, basic Buddhist teachings. It provides the foundation--the groundwork and basis--for all other movements within Buddhism. The Pali canon, arranged into 'Three Baskets'--discourse, discipline and commentary--delineates this primordial school of Buddhist thought

---

[31]"Buddha-Karita" in Stryk, p. 15.

[32]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, Jonathan Smith, ed., (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 129. Concerning the 'religious nature' of Buddhism, the following words apply. "Buddhism is a theistic religion not only in its belief in the existence of benevolent superhuman beings who assist and protect, but also in its belief in malevolent super-human beings, who attack and harm." Spiro, p. 161. "In Buddhism, the gods are many...[To describe Buddhism as a] polytheist view in most forms is 'not wrong.' To try to sharpen the categories more than this tells us lots about ourselves--little of Buddhism." Notes, Dr. Teiser, 18 Sept. 1995.

and practice.[33]

Four 'Holy or Noble Truths' enable humankind to find peace

with themselves and the world:

> "...that there is [Duhkha] (suffering), that its origin
> is Samudaya (thirst, desire), that men can bring about its
> cessation, Nirodha, through the attainment of Nirvana, and
> that the only way to achieve Nirvana is to follow the Magga
> (the Noble Eightfold Path): Right Views, or acceptance of
> the Buddha's teaching; Right Thought, or aspirations leading
> to purity and charity; Right Speech; Right Conduct; Right
> Livelihood; Right Effort, or avoidance of lapses into
> frailty; Right Mindfulness, or constant awareness of the
> truth of the doctrine; and Right Concentration, or spiritual
> exercise leading to an awakening."[34]

The Threefold Training classifies practices of the Eightfold

Path. The heading Morality (Sila), describes moral rules to

purify and begin transformation of one's nature, increasing self-

insight and mindfulness. Sila groups together Right Speech,

Right Conduct and Right Livelihood. Under Wisdom (Prajna,'PRAHJ-

nah) come Right Views and Right Thought (intention).

Concentration (Samadhi, 'suh-MAH-dee'), "to cultivate meditative

calm and one pointed attention," categorizes Right Effort, Right

Mindfulness and Right Concentration. [35]

The Three Treasures (Three Jewels), taking refuge in the

Buddha, Dharma (the law, truth or doctrine), and Sangha, lead to

the avoidance of pain. "He who takes refuge with Buddha, the

Law, and the Church; he who, with clear understanding, sees the

---

[33]The Tripataka (Three Baskets) is composed of Sutras
(discourses, scriptures), Vinaya ('VI-nuh-yuh,' discipline for
the Sangha) and Abhidharma ('uh-bee-DAHR-muh,' commentary or
doctrine). Nikayas (nee-KAH-yuh), the "Thus have I heard..."
early sayings of Ananda, one of Buddha's disciples, are the
earliest form of Buddhist texts.

[34]Introduction, Stryk, p. xxxviii.

[35]See notes, Dr. Teiser, 2 Oct. 1995.

four holy truths: pain, the origin of pain, the destruction of pain, and the eightfold holy way that leads to the quieting of pain;--that is the safe refuge, that is the best refuge; having gone to that refuge, a man is delivered from all pain."[36]

These foundational concepts--the Four Holy Truths, Threefold Training, and the Three Treasures--identify basic Theravada Buddhist practice. Buddha prepares the way. He identifies the path. He encourages all to follow, to attain Nirvana. Enlightenment, although difficult to achieve, is open to all. Monks and nuns, however, as 'spiritual virtuosos,' do have a decided advantage in making progress towards this awakening.

Essential Theravada school teachings are the starting point for Mahayana development. The 'power packed' notion embodied in Mahayana reinterpretations of Bodhisattvas (boh-dee-SAHT-vah) opened attainment of the Buddha path to everyone.[37] Compassion and acting on behalf of others, exemplified by Bodhisattvas, acquired a renewed emphasis. All could aim for enlightenment, inspired by Bodhicittas (thoughts of enlightenment), which may result in a 'conversion like' experience.

Mahayana thought expresses itself in the broad 'Pure Land,' Ch'an and Tantra movements. Pure Land, the most popular form of Buddhism in the world, identifies a goal for rebirth, the 'land of bliss' (Pure Land or Western Paradise). Amitabha (ah-mee-TAH-

---

[36]From "The Dhammapada," in Stryk, p. 59.

[37]"In Mahayana Buddhism the term (Bodhisattva) applies to those who have experienced enlightenment (bodhi) but who have taken a special vow to continue being reborn into samsara (rather than entering nirvana) so as to deliver others from their suffering by aiding in their attainment of enlightenment." Robinson and Johnson, p. 237.

bah) Buddha, as a Bodhisattva, "made a series of vows to create a
paradise of unmatched magnificence for those who depended on him
completely for salvation and expressed their trust by invocation
of his name..."[38] As a result of invoking or chanting the 'namu
amida butsu' ('praise and homage to Amitabha Buddha'),
practitioners attained rebirth in the land of bliss.[39] As
identified in the 'True Pure Land" practice of Shinran (shin-
rahn), the compassionate Amitabha Buddha became a 'savior
figure,' carrying awakened ones to the Pure Land.[40] As
recipients of Amitabha's 'grace,' devotees express gratitude to
him as part of their ritualistic practice.

The Ch'an ('chahn,' Japanese 'Zen') school has not attained
the popularity of 'Pure Land' trends of thought though its
current 'nominal' fame in American/European/Australian culture

---

[38]HarperCollins, p. 45.

[39]The Pure Land school responded to the 'decline of the
Dharma' (Mappo) by simplifying the practice. Genshin ('gen-
shin,' 947-1018) included, along with other Buddhist practice,
the invoking or chanting of the 'namu amida Buddha' as
efficacious for rebirth in the Pure Land. Honen ('hoh-nen,'
1133-1212), taught that only the nembutsu ('nem-boo-tsoo,'
repetition of the namu amida Buddha) was effective, said the
instant before death. Shinran (1173-1262) instituted the married
priesthood. "If you marry, I (Amitabha) will carry you to pure
land." Notes, Dr. Teiser, 22 Nov. 1995.

[40]"If we entrust ourselves to Amida's [Amitabha's] vow to
grasp and never abandon us, then even though, through unforeseen
circumstances, we commit an evil act at the very end or die
without the nembutsu emerging from our lips, we will immediately
realize birth into the Pure Land. Moveover, even if we do
spontaneously say the Name at the point of death, it is nothing
other than our expression of gratitude for Amida's benevolence,
entrusting to the buddha more and more as the time of
enlightenment draws near." (Tannisho: A Primer, Trans., Dennis
Hirota, (Kyoto, Japan: Ryukoku University, 1982), p. 11.7, in The
Buddhist World of Thought and Practice (Readings), REL 225,
Professor Teiser, Fall 1995.

betrays this fact. Building especially on the 'family/lineage'
aspect of traditional Chinese faith, Ch'an traces back to the
Bodhidharma (boh-dee-DAHR-muh), a late fifth century patriarch
who introduced Buddhism into China. Shen-hui ('Shen-hway', 668-
760), a monk who became the seventh patriarch, promoted the Ch'an
school.

While never overlooking literary tradition, ritual,
discipline, regimen, extreme intensity and concentration (more
'gradual' practice), Ch'an nevertheless advocates a sudden,
speedy, 'unmediated' enlightenment. The innate Buddha nature
within allows all to have the potential to achieve this
awakening.

A lineage, an 'ineffable and formless' dharma, passes on
from generation to generation, master to student.[41] "Then he
transmitted to me the Dharma of Sudden Enlightenment and the
robe, saying: 'I make you the Sixth Patriarch. The robe is the
proof and is to be handed down from generation to generation. My
Dharma must be transmitted from mind to mind. You must make
people awaken themselves.'"[42]

Koans are part of the literary tradition of Ch'an. These
'public document' sayings and dialogues of the masters, are

---

[41]"A special transmission outside the Scripture; No
dependence upon words and letters; Direct pointing to the soul of
man; Seeing into one's own nature." (Attributed to Daruma, in
Buddhism, Christmas Humphreys, (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin
Books, 1967), p. 182.

[42]The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan, ed. Wm.
Theodore De Bary, (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 217 in
Teiser, Fall 1995.

short, pithy, apparently nonsensical verses.[43]   Yet, with study,

rigorous application of logic, and awareness of both the duality

involved and their question/answer format, interpretation can

take place.

Tantra (THUN-truh) practice followed a direct route from

India to Tibet, by-passing Chinese encumbrances.   This explains,

in part, its unique contribution to Buddhist thought.   Duality is

central to understanding Tantra texts (the word Tantra is taken

from 'taut thread' or 'woof'), which are a network of teachings,

incantations and esoteric sayings.   The Vajrayana (vuhj-ruh-YAH-

nuh) literature, contrasts masculine diamond/sword/thunderbolt

images with feminine lotus flower depictions.   Physical,

philosophical, ironic, sexual, meditational and virtuous

interpretations all can apply to tantras.

Unique practices of the Tantric movement include the

necessity of a personal guru (G00-roo) to serve as a mentor,

liturgical meditation, mantras ('MAHN-truh,' meditational devices

serving as instruments of the mind), and mahasiddhas ('mah-hah-

SI-dah,' unconventional, enlightened, 'wandering about'

compassionate masters).   In addition, Tantrism--rather than

ridding self of desire (samudaya) through avoidance--advocates

the use of the very troubling desire to eliminate it:

> "Just as water that has entered the ear may be removed
> by water and just as a thorn may be removed by a thorn, so
> those who know how, remove passion by means of passion

---

[43]"Someone asked: 'In phenomena what is true?'   The Master
said: 'The very phenomena are themselves truth.'   'Then how
should it be revealed?' he asked.   The Master lifted the tea
tray." De Bary, p. 233.

itself."[44]

Worship

"I go for refuge to the Buddha; I go for refuge to the Dharma; I go for refuge to the Sangha"[45]

Buddhist worship focuses upon the temple or monastic center for corporate training and rite, followed up by individual practices usually done in the home. The temple is the most important social/religious location. In Theravada practice, a temple includes residence area for monks; a sacred place for Vinaya rites; a shrine for worship; a stupa ('STOO-puh,' dome-shaped burial mound, honoring Buddhas and past clerics); a bodhi tree (in honor of the location where the Buddha received his enlightenment), and a preaching hall for monks to give sermons.[46]

Inside the shrine, Southern Buddhism places an image of Guatama Buddha, who may be flanked by early disciples Sariputra and Maudgalyayana. Mahayana practice may have three Buddhas with any number of disciples present. These images are reminders of the spiritual qualities of the holy ones represented. In some ways they may also be "infused with the spirit or power of the being they represent" providing "protective power for good" to

---

[44]"Cittavisuddiprakarana," vv, 37-38, as quoted in Buddhist Texts, ed. Edward Conze, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 221, in Teiser, Fall 1995.

[45]'Taking the refuge' is a key expression of Buddhist commitment. Harvey, p. 176.

[46]The Encyclopedia of World Faiths, ed. Peter Bishop and Michael Darton, (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1987), p. 230.

those gathered in worship.[47] The 'delights of glorifying' the
Buddha--chanting the name, making the image, reciting stories, or
visiting a stupa--are the adherent's response to the One who, out
of his compassion, responds to the worship needs of living
beings.[48]

Caves, both natural and man made, sometimes are a part of
the temple area. Their cool, calm atmosphere is conducive to
reflective meditation. Donated artifacts--incense, candles, food
and flowers, gold gilded pagoda roofs and images--all serve as
means for merit.

The Triple Refuge (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha) is central to
worship. 'Refuge' does not refer to a place of hiding, rather to
something "the thought of which purifies, uplifts and strengthens
the heart." It promotes a "better way of living--a joyful haven
of calm, a firm 'island in the midst of flood' in contrast to the
troubles of life."[49] Ceremonies concretize the Three Refuges
through tangible reminders: images, stupas and the bodhi tree
suggest the Buddha; sermons or teaching symbolize the Dharma;
monks embody the Sangha.

Membership may involve no ceremony at all. "If one
understands the Buddha's teaching, and if one is convinced that
his teaching is the right Path and if one tries to follow it,
then one is a Buddhist."[50] On the other hand, some see the

----

[47]Harvey, p. 176.

[48]Bishop, p. 242.

[49]Harvey, pp. 176-177.

[50]Rahula, p. 80.

Triple Refuge as a 'Buddhist profession of faith.' In reciting
the Triple Refuge three times, one formally becomes a Buddhist.[51]

The daily cycle of a devout layperson in Southern Buddhism
includes morning and evening devotions at a small shrine located
in the eastern side of the home. A recitation of the Five
Precepts occurs as part of these devotions. The village 'chapel'
or assembly hall is the setting for public devotions each
evening.

Six family/social groups are seen as sacred, worthy of
respect and worship--parents/children, teachers/pupils,
husbands/wives, friends/relatives/neighbors, masters/servants,
religious leader/laity. In performing one's duties toward these
groups, one 'worships'.[52]

Protective chants (the 'Paritta' and many others) serve a
variety of purposes. Self-confidence comes through their
soothing repetition. Hostile opponents become 'well disposed' by
means of the chanter's action. New merit develops. Past merit
is stimulated. Chanting pleases gods. The spiritual power of
Buddha also continues in some way through the repetition of his
words.[53]

In Pure Land practice, singleminded attentiveness while
reciting the nembutsu (nem-boo-tsoo) involves hearing the name
'Amitabha Buddha;' visualizing what he looks like; keeping him in

---

[51]Abe in Sharma, p. 74.

[52]Rahula, pp. 78-80.

[53]Harvey, p. 190.

mind; and being 'explicitly verbal in recitation.'[54]

Giving (Dana) by the laity acquires merit. Special meals to monks, purchasing domestic animals from slaughter, gilding pagoda rooftops with gold leaf, all serve to enhance better rebirth.[55]

Aspects of folk religion may be seen as an expedient device.[56] Magic rituals, powers in Alchemic stones, invoking 'mythical magicians' who possess supernatural abilities, aid villagers in Myanmar.[57] In Sri Lanka, worship comprises three layers: (1) officially approved temple rites; (2) worship of Hindu gods and goddesses, which is not objected to by monks; (3) and, unapproved though practiced, ceremonies "held to appease evil spirits with a view to healing sickness."[58] The adage "heaven can wait, but the bite of a cobra must be healed,"[59] sustains such practice.

---

[54]Notes, Dr. Teiser, 22 Nov. 1995.

[55]Spiro, p. 261.

[56]"These traditional observances, though inessential, have their value in satisfying the religious emotions and needs of those who are less advanced intellectually and spiritually, and helping them gradually along the path." Rahula, p. 81.

[57]Spiro, pp. 142, 163.

[58]Anthony Fernando, "Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka", in Dumoulin, p. 70.

[59]Spiro, p. 142.

Ethics/Motivation

> "'But what, reverend Sir, is the place where a man must stand to order his walk aright and realize [Nirvana]?'
>
> 'Morality, great king, is the place! Abiding steadfast in Morality, putting forth diligent mental effort,--whether in the land of the Scythians or in the land of the Greeks, whether in China or in Tartary...no matter where a man may stand, by ordering his walk aright, he realizes [Nirvana].'"[60]

The motivational impact of Buddhism--its ability to provide an inner urge to move or prompt people to action--derives from a variety of factors. Most obviously, the desire for Nirvana and positive rebirth stimulates moral behavior, giving, and meditation, all 'instruments of salvation.'[61] Seen negatively, fear of hell inspires good action.

Contentment arises from Buddhist influence. Meditation brings serenity. Worship, through offerings given, and mental state achieved, encourages tranquility. Acceptance of one's position, especially for the poor, whereby karma justifies one's poverty, brings social stability. Cultivation of an open-hearted and sensitive attitude to others enriches one's own sense of peace in return.

A difficult, but nonetheless important, motivating ethical force is the concept of 'no self' (anatman). The radical Buddhist view of the 'self' sees it as a false, imaginary belief. Buddhist thought sees 'no self', as "an interdependent, self-organizing process shaped by the flow of experience and the choices that condition this flow. [It is p]ossessed of no

---

[60]"Questions of Melinda", in Stryk, p. 124.

[61]Spiro, p. 140.

'I'."[62]   There is no independent, autonomous entity.   Rather,

anatman ties individuals with all living beings.   "'[Y]our'

suffering and 'my' suffering are not inherently different.   They

are just suffering, so the barrier which generally keeps us

within our own 'self-interest' should be dissolved, or widened in

its scope till it includes all beings.'"[63]

This being the case, "egoicity...the problem with 'mine-

ness'" produces "selfish desire, craving, attachments, hatred,

ill-will, conceit, pride and egoism."[64]   Realizing anatman, one

has compassion for others, identifies and sympathizes with them,

and possesses genuine humility because all are one, 'in the same

boat' together.

Buddhist practice--due to karma and its effects--sustains

coping skills in difficulties.   An irrepressible optimism, that

the future is full of positive possibilities, helps in adversity.

Even a sense of resignation assists to 'see one through great

difficulty.'[65]

Key ethical practices include (1) the Middle Path; (2) the

Five Precepts and Sila morality factors of the Noble Eightfold

Path; (3) Compassion; (4) Meditation.

(1) The Middle Path accentuates the 'humanity' of the

---

[62]Joanna Macy, "Dependent Co-Arising: The Distinctiveness of
Buddhist Ethics," Journal of Religious Ethics, (Spring, 1979),
pp. 40-41.

[63]Peter Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, (New York:
Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 197-198.

[64]Macy, p. 40.   See also Walpola Rahula as quoted in Abe, p.
76.

[65]See Spiro, p. 452.

Buddhist ethic. "Universal norms are constant but must be applied in the most suitable way, adapted to the varying circumstances of life...[It is not] a bunch of detailed, petty regulations, encroaching unduly on the moral autonomy of the individual."[66] Avoiding extremes--either an overt pursuit of passionate world desire, or an austere discipline practiced by ascetics--enables individuals throughout the culture to exhibit moderation and grace.

(2) The Five Precepts and Sila morality factors of the Noble Eightfold Path (Right Speech, Action and Livelihood), directly impact ethical practice.[67] The Five Precepts are not commandments as such, but 'rules of training,' ideals to live up to. In time, these traits become positive, expected norms by which people live.[68]

(3) To demonstrate compassion--love, charity, kindness, tolerance and such noble qualities[69]--follows the Bodhisattva example of an "enlightened being who out of infinite compassion renounces entry into final Nirvana, in order to help all living beings obtain release from the cycle of suffering, birth and

---

[66]See "The Basic Teachings of Buddhism" by Hajime Nakamura in Buddhism in the Modern World, ed., Heinrich Dumoulin, p. 25.

[67]See Rahula, pp. 46-47, for a detailed discussion of each factor.

[68]Harvey, pp. 199, 207.

[69]Rahula, p. 46. Rahula continues, "It is regrettable that many scholars forget this great ideal [love and compassion for all living beings] of the Buddha's teaching, and indulge in only dry philosophical and metaphysical divagations when they talk and write about Buddhism. The Buddha gave his teaching 'for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world'..." Ibid.

death..."[70]

Anatman provides the impetus. Rid of the notion of an ego, through meditation "we are led to a limitless expansion of the self in a practical sense, because one identifies oneself with more and more living beings. The whole world and the individual are intimately and indissolubly linked."[71] This linkage 'puts one in the other's shoes,' not because of a desire to love the unique individuality within the other, but to recognize a oneness with all. "[W]idening the boundaries of what we regard as ours...We invite everyone's self to enter our own personality; thus we break down the barriers that separate us from others."[72]

Compassion follows the Dhammapada teaching: "Let one conquer wrath by meekness. Let one conquer wrong by goodness. Let one conquer the mean man by a gift and a liar by the truth."[73]

A unique display of kindness, on a broad societal level, came about through a rural self-help program, called 'Sarvodaya' in Sri-Lanka. Over 300,000 volunteers, working in more than 2,000 villages, sought to instill personal liberation within villagers themselves and freedom from "unjust and immoral socio-economic chains" affecting the community at large.[74] A.T. Ariyaratne, founder of the movement, adapted the Four Noble

---

[70]Dumoulin, p. 159.

[71]Nakamura in Dumoulin, p. 29.

[72]Ibid., p. 28.

[73]"Dhammapada 223 in Ibid., p. 30. A similar call to forbearance is "Amongst men there is no one who is not blamed. People blame him who sits silent and him who speaks, they also blame the man who speaks in moderation."

[74]Macy, p. 49.

Truths to the community setting: "(1) there is a decadent village; (2) there is a cause (for this decadence); (3) there is a hope (that the village can reawaken); and (4) there is a way (to the reawakening of all...)".[75]

(4) Meditation falls indirectly within the ethical realm. It involves training for more effective service.[76] "A calm and pure spirit produces a healthy body and further's efficiency in ones work."[77] Meditation discipline is especially needed in the urban, "tension-ridden pattern of life...The pace of living is fast and a man is under pressure to run increasingly faster even if only to keep from falling behind the times. He is subjected to great strain and kept under heavy stress whether at work or at play, in the office or at home. Physical wear and tear is excessive, the load on the mind is sometimes unbearable, leading to mental disturbance."[78]

It is an ethical duty for a Buddhist to ensure a 'good death' happens to someone dying. The ideal is to die in a "calm, aware state, joyfully recollecting previous good deeds, rather than regretting, so that the best possible rebirth is

---

[75]Ibid., p. 50.

[76]"It is unfortunate that...[t]he moment the word 'meditation' is mentioned, one thinks of an escape from the daily activities of life; assuming a particular posture, like a statue in some cave or cell in a monastery, in some remote place cut off from society; and musing on, or being absorbed in, some kind of mystic or mysterious thought or trance. True Buddhist 'meditation' does not mean this kind of escape at all." Rahula, p. 67.

[77]Buddhism and Society in Southeast Asia, by Donald K. Swearer, (Chambersburg, Penn: Anima Books, 1981), p. 62.

[78]Winston King, "Contemporary Burmese Buddhism", in Dumoulin, p. 95.

obtained."[79]

Monks officiate at funeral rites.[80] Cremation usually occurs. In some Mahayana practices, readings from the <u>Tibetan Book of the Dead</u> at time of death serve to "guide through the 49 days between lives, overcome lingering attachment to the body/family, and gain liberating insight."[81] Within Pure Land, strings--attached from the hands of Amitabha to those of the dying--aid thoughts that Amitabha assists in the journey to the Pure Land.[82]

Ethics speaks as well to the position of women within Buddhist practice. "The Buddha's equal concern for both sexes..is made clear in a passage where he says that he would not die until the monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen were well trained (Dhammapada 11.104)."[83] Yet, "because a woman undergoes certain sufferings that a man is free from: having to leave her family for her husband's; menstruation; pregnancy;

---

[79]Harvey, p. 212. "The last thought, the thought of dying, is of prime importance with regard to the future lot...if the mental state at death is good, a pleasant rebirth will take place; if it is bad, an unpleasant one." Hastings, James, <u>Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics</u>, (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, Scholar Press Reprint, 1981), pp. 448-449. "All rituals at death are aimed at promoting an auspicious human rebirth in the next life, as well as preventing lower forms of rebirth taking place." Turner, B. Kali, <u>Multi-Faith Information Manual</u>, (Toronto, Ontario: Ontario Multi-faith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care, 1995), p. 16.

[80]Practice varies. Hastings identifies six separate rites in Japan alone.

[81]Harvey, p. 212.

[82]<u>Ibid</u>.

[83]Harvey, p. 216.

childbirth..."[84] female rebirth is somewhat less favorable. In

traditional Theravada society, women are "ritually excluded as

major religious actors" during child-bearing years.[85]

Yet, Buddhist women are challenging traditional teaching.

The Venerable Chung Ok Lee, head minister of the Won Buddhist

United Nations Office, is working with others to "create a more

unified social structure where men and women have an equal

voice."[86] Themes addressed in the Fourth World Conference on

Women in Beijing, China, in Sept. 1995 support this trend.[87]

Socio-Economic and Cultural Factors

> "Prosperity is judged not by personal comforts and
> luxuries but by the number, magnitude, splendor and actual
> condition of temples and monasteries." [88]

The above description of economic status within Burmese

village life, though taking place over thirty years ago, gives

insight into the economic impact of Buddhism. Economic

---

[84]Ibid.

[85]Richard Robinson and Willard Johnson, The Buddhist
Religion A Historical Introduction, (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth,
1982), p. 130. See also John Snelling, "The issue of women in
Buddhism is a frequent talking point too, not least because women
are accorded a distinctly secondary place in traditional Eastern
Buddhism and, in addition, the order of nuns has very largely
died out, thus denying to half the Buddhist population the
advantages inherent in higher ordination." The Buddhist Handbook,
(London: Century Hutchinson, 1987), p. 270.

[86]Ven. Chung Ok Lee, "Religious Women's Commitment to
Healing the World Community", in A Sourcebook for Earth's
Community of Religions, ed., Joel Beversluis, (New York: Global
Education Associates, 1995), p. 270.

[87]See "International Conferences and Conventions, United
Nations Department of Public Information", in Beversluis, p. 273.

[88]Spiro, p. 396.

development is not an end in itself. Rather, it reaches for a nobler purpose.[89] Society must achieve certain minimal material standards so its population can achieve spiritual success. Communities need wealth to achieve merit--through donations, upkeep of pagodas and shrines, and purchase of animals from slaughter.

Buddha's emphasis on 'master-servant' duties, enhancing this relationship to a worshipful dimension, serves to balance greed and exploitation, promote contentment, and provide freedom from want or crime. Yet, for all its importance, "economic and material happiness in 'not worth one sixteenth part' of the spiritual happiness arising out of a faultless and good life.'"[90]

Buddhism can provide business acumen. In addition to developing patience, perseverance, and endurance, it serves to hone a competitive edge. In Japan, Zen practice, especially since the 1970s, experienced a renewed interest "particularly among business people who rediscovered the advantages of using the traditional discipline and philosophy of Zen as a weapon in their competition with domestic as well as foreign business adversaries."[91]

From earliest times, Buddhist practice highly regarded art and architecture.[92] Used as a reminder to support and reinforce

---

[89]Rahula, p. 81.

[90]Rahula, p. 83.

[91]Boye De Mente, Behind the Japanese Bow, (Lincolnwood, Illinois: Passport Books, 1993), p. 23.

[92]"Once, it is written, the venerable Ananda said to the Exalted One, 'The half of the holy life, Lord, is friendship with the lovely, association with the lovely, intimacy with the

Buddhist thought, art focused attention on the eternal truths.

Enhancements--the alms bowl, crystal relics container, ceremonial

implements, bodhi trees, statues, paintings, replicas of events,

and mandalas (a cosmic representation in the form of geometric

shapes printed on hangings)--served to augment traditional

worship means. Two major types of Buddhist architecture, the

stupa/pagoda and resources used to sustain monastic life (images,

temples and residence halls for monks), served such purpose as

well.[93] The practice of circumambulation (walking around while

meditating or worshiping) contributed to the growth of objects to

contemplate and use as meditation aids.

Theravada Buddhism focuses on images of the historical

Buddha and Jataka (JAH-tuh-kuh) tales. It seeks to instill inner

strength and the means necessary to triumph over evil and

illusion. In Sri Lanka, Theravada art expresses an "ability to

capture meditative serenity, and focused energy...capturing a

direct, uncomplicated route towards the Buddhist truth".[94]

Mahayana schools, celebrate "cosmic, celestial Buddhas and

Bodhisattvas...awesome, transcendent visions... heavenly realms

and riches of rewards awaiting those managing to be reborn in

such a paradise."[95]

---

lovely.' Said the Exalted One, 'Say not so, Ananda; it is the whole, not the half of the holy life.'" Christmas Humphreys, Buddhism, (London: Penguin, 1969), p. 206.

[93]See R.E. Fisher, Buddhist Art and Architecture, (Singapore: Thames and Hudson, 1993), p. 27.

[94]Fisher, p. 71.

[95]Fisher, pp. 10, 51. Sensuous carvings and portrayals, bordering on the erotic, are some of these creations. "Such are the snares of desire, but behold the Master's cool disdain of

Buddhism affected painting in new ways. In China, a reverence for artistic achievement placed painters on the same level as inspired poets. Art became an aid to meditation.[96] Mental training in thirteenth century Japan focused on the pupil becoming one with the object of his training. A merging of consciousness--"the painter's with his brush; the potter's with his clay; the garden designer's with the materials of the garden"--became the goal.[97] Zen artists, using self-discipline, concentration, detachment and contemplation, become a part of nature, merging insight and paint in an instinctual manner.[98]

In Northern Buddhism, the art of garden building contributed to a climate inviting contemplation and analysis. Observers of the fifteenth century rock and sand Zen garden in Ryoanji, Kyoto, Japan, see a courtyard of fifteen large stones emplaced in a raked gravel setting. The illusion created develops a perspective of impermanence. Seemingly grand and important one

---

them. Be ye likewise dispassionate in order that, passing beyond the forms of beauty, ye may find itself." Humphreys, p. 206.

[96]"Buddhism influenced Chinese art...It introduced an entirely new approach to pictures, a reverence for the artist's achievement such as did not exist either in ancient Greece or in Europe up to the time of the Renaissance. The Chinese were the first people who did not think of the making of pictures as a rather menial task, but who placed the painter on the same level as the inspired poet...religious art in China came to be employed less for telling the legends of the Buddha and the Chinese teachers, less for the teaching of a particular doctrine...than as an aid to the practice of meditation. Devout artists began to paint water and mountains in a spirit of reverence, not in order to teach any particular lesson...but to provide material for deep thought." E.H. Gombrich, The Story of Art, (New York: Phaidon, 1973), pp. 108-110.

[97]De Mente, p. 3.

[98]Artist Hiroshi Sakai, "The Living Art of Japan", College of Marin, California, flier on 'sumi-e' painting, no date.

day, the great rocks become gravel.[99]

Politics

>   "Buddhists must pursue 'not a will-o'-the-wisp Nirvana
> secluded in the cells of their monasteries, but a Nirvana
> attained here and now by a life of self-forgetful
> activity...'"[100]

The 'life of self-forgetful activity' referred to by Sri

Lankan Buddhist D. Wijewardena often includes that of political

involvement. From King Ashoka (uh-SHOH-kuh) to the present,

leaders of state in Buddhist countries readily apply the Dharma

to their national constituencies. The Sanga adds a significant

political and social dimension.

Emperor Asoka (274-236), in what might be seen as one of

history's first recorded cases of 'post traumatic stress

syndrome', turned from 'Asoka the fierce' following his conquests

during the Kalinga war.[101] King Asoka's positive example as

'Asoka the righteous' continues to influence political leaders in

Buddhist countries today.

In Southeast Asia, leaders capitalize on the use of Buddhist

symbols and influence. For example, seats of power are often

located near stupas, so that these memorials can not only give

reverence to past spiritual leaders, but endorse present day

leadership as well. In carrying out their duties, Buddhist

---

[99]See Fisher, pp. 165-166.

[100]D. Wijewardena, The Revolt in the Temple, (1953), as
quoted in Eliade, Mircea, ed., The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol.
2, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 586.

[101]In conquering Kalinga (northern India and environs),
Asoka's forces slaughtered 100,000, deported 150,000 and spread
famine/pestilence. In part, the emperor's guilt (post trauma
stress?) led him to embrace Buddhism. Stryk, p. 238.

leaders experience the tensions inherent in using power and
authority while living up to the ideals of Buddhist practice.[102]
Even if they do not espouse distinctly Buddhist precepts, they
are aware of its prevailing influence.[103]

The Sangha, possessing numerical strength and respected by
the laity, increasingly is called upon to exert political
influence.[104] In 'classic Buddhism', kings protected the Sangha,
took an active role in promoting its welfare and sought to
maintain high standards for those called to monastic life. In
turn, the monastic orders gave formal and informal support for
government rulers. Today, especially in countries like Sri Lanka
and Myanmar, frustration aroused by injustice leads to more
active Sangha social involvement.[105] In Kampuchea and Laos,
political leaders determined monastic orders to be either
reactionary or developmental hindrances and, within the past two

---

[102]The terms Cakravartin (wheel-rolling ruler) and Dharmaraja
(righteous ruler), describe this tension. See Stanley Tambriah's
Buddhism Betrayed (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 2
and World Conqueror and World Renouncer, (New York: Cambridge
Press, 1976), pp. 9-18, for further description.

[103]When asked why nations with large Buddhist populations so
often have violent rulers, dissident Nobel Peace Prize winner Daw
Aung San Suu Kyi answered: "...it is very difficult for us to
explain why we should have violent governments in Buddhist
countries because the governments themselves claim to be
Buddhist! If you stay here long enough and you watch television,
you will see the generals...donating things to monasteries,
praying at pagodas and behaving very much like good Buddhists.
So one wonders why such violence exists. And I think the
conclusion one would have to come to is that perhaps they are not
practicing Buddhism anything like enough." "The Passion of Suu
Kyi", by Claudia Driefus, The New York Times Magazine, (7 Jan.
1996), p. 36.

[104]Tambiah, Buddhism Betrayed, p. 18, and Dumoulin, p. 37.

[105]Spiro, p. 378.

decades, disestablished them. Observers wonder how this will
affect the long term survival of Buddhism in these countries.[106]
Throughout Southeast Asia, whether "the monk can continue to
symbolize values of lasting significance embodied in the ideals
of Buddhism and at the same time speak to the needs of societies
in radical transition is a fundamental issue [for]...the very
survival of this religious tradition as we have known it."[107]

In post-revolutionary China, the land reform movement of
1952-54 saw the government confiscating large monasteries.
Though a few 'trophy monasteries' remained for outside visitors,
the impact devastated Buddhist practice.[108] The government
promoted a popularized 'revisionist Buddhist doctrine' and sought
to "eliminate the causes of religion, so it [would] die of its
own accord."[109]

Current unrest in Sri Lanka and Myanmar questions

---

[106]Swearer, p. 64.

[107]Swearer, p. 64.

[108]"Buddhism as a conspicuous feature of Chinese life seems finished." Holmes Welch, "Buddhism in China Today", in Dumoulin, p. 177.

[109]Ibid., p. 174. Examples of 'revisionist Buddhist doctrine' include: '(1) Labor best fulfilled Bodhisattva vows. (2) Collective life of the communist state reduces the ego and increases chances of escaping the cycle of rebirth. (3) The 'Western Paradise Pure Land' is created here on earth by the communists. (4) Buddhist compassion really meant killing bad people in order to save good people. Also, from Modern Buddhism, the official journal of the Chinese Buddhist Association, set up in 1953, disbanded in 1965: "The best thing is to be able to join the army directly and to learn the spirit in which Shakyamuni, as the embodiment of pity and guide to Buddhahood, killed robbers to save the people and suffered hardships on behalf of all living beings. To wipe out the American imperialist demons that are breaking world peace is, according to the Buddha's doctrine, not only blameless but actually has merit." Ibid., p. 176.

application of the Buddhist non-violent principles. Few dispute

that non-violence is the Buddhist ideal.[110] Yet the realities of

life, where terrorist "guerrillas had attacked Buddhist temples

and killed monks," forced some to reassess their position.[111]

Active monk protest and tacit approval of violence is the

perspective some take. Yet, the words of Stanley Tambiah apply.

> "...it is necessary to realize that...monks must
> necessarily experience a profound misgiving, even
> consternation, when monks become caught up in political
> violence. There are certain normative rules linked in
> doctrinal terms to the monks' vocation, which advocate
> nonviolence and the necessity to repudiate and to be
> distanced from all forms of taking life and inflicting
> injury. There is an inescapable dilemma here which surely
> must tug at the conscience and moral sensibilities of all
> Buddhists."[112]

---

[110]See Rahula, pp. 5, 47 and Stryk, p. xliv. The following
parable of the saw expresses this ideal well. "The Blessed One
said: 'Though robbers or highwaymen might carve you limb from
limb with a double-handed saw, yet even then whoever gives way to
hatred is not a follower of my teaching. You should train
yourselves like this: Our minds will not become deranged, we will
not utter evil speech, we will remain with a friendly heart,
devoid of hatred: and, beginning with these people, we will
develop the thought of loving-kindness.'" Majjhima Nidaya, 1.129,
Oxford Book of Prayer, ed., George Appleton, (New York: Oxford,
1985), p. 302.

[111]Some see 'skillful means/Middle Way' doctrine as
applicable: "...a Bodhisattva may kill a person about to murder
his parents or a monk, so that the assailant avoids the evil
karma of killing, which is experienced by himself instead...In
Korea, one response to a Japanese invasion in 1592 was that a
leading monk actually raised a militia of 5,000 monks!" (Harvey,
p. 202). Also, "...the career of Dutthagamani, the hero-king of
Sri Lanka's famous chronicle, the Mahavamsa, whose moral dilemma
and remorse surrounding the slaughter of Damilas (Tamils) during
his war to unify the island was posed and answered in a less
charitable way. The king was comforted by eight arhants
(enlightened saints) with the words that he had slain one and a
half human beings: one had embraced the three refuges of the
Buddha, the dhamma (doctrine) and the sangha (order of monks),
and the other had taken the five precepts; the rest were
'unbelievers and men of evil life.'" Mahavamsa, chap. 25, verses
101-111, as quoted in Tambiah, Buddhism Betrayed, p. 1.

[112]Ibid., p. 101.

Manners/Customs

"Therefore it is desirable that you should practice impartiality, but it cannot be attained if you are inclined to habits of jealousy, irritability, harshness, hastiness, obstinacy, laziness, or [weariness of body/mind due to strain]. I desire you not to have these habits. The basis of all this is constant avoidance of irritability and hastiness in your business..."[113]

For harmonious interactions with civilians or United Nations/Allied soldiers from Buddhist countries, understanding of general attitudes and specific practices, as illustrated in the above guidance from the "First Separate Kalinga Edict" of King Asoka, helps. In their book, Encountering the Chinese, Wu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove identify three fundamental values of the Chinese which contrast with the basic orientation of United States culture.[114] (1) Collectivism, whereby individuals subordinate their personal goals to those of a 'collective', characterize China's culture. The smallest unit of society is not the individual, rather the collective. Whether work unit, family, or village neighbors, the 'community' is the important concept. (2) Large power distance, the idea that power may be distributed unequally among individuals, exhibits itself in the

---

[113]"Edict of Emperor Ashoka", in Stryk, p. 242.

[114]The concepts identified could apply to many, if not most, cultures addressed in this paper. See also Joy Hendry, Wrapping Culture, "...Japan, using the metaphor of layers of lacquer in reference to the self-restraint it is thought valuable to acquire there. 'The more coats of varnish that are laid on the foundation by laborious work throughout the years, the more valuable becomes the...finished product. So it is with a people...There is nothing spurious about it; it is not a daub to cover defects. It is at least as valuable as the substance it adorns.' Nohara Komakichi, The True Face of Japan, as cited in Hendry, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 6.

traditional respect shown to age, seniority, rank, maleness and family background.   (3) Intergroup harmony and avoidance of overt conflict in interpersonal relationships--especially with family members, close friends and colleagues--is "a matter of supreme concern."[115]

Self-restraint is central in Buddhism.   The following guidance is appropriate when considering the high value placed on this quality.

> "Frankness or abruptness, especially in offering criticism of any kind, should be avoided. People...are generally reserved, quiet, refined, and friendly. They respect a person who is friendly and who carefully avoids hurting the feelings of others. Loud, untactful, or boisterous behavior is usually regarded as being in very poor taste...Traditionally, men and women do not show affection in public...An individual's actions reflect upon his whole family."[116]

Specific instructions follow.

(1) When visiting a pagoda--even the most run-down and dilapidated one--take off shoes and socks.[117]

(2) Avoid touching someone deliberately on the head as it is the highest part, literally and spiritually, of the body.

---

[115]See Wu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove, Encountering the Chinese, (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991), pp. 5-8. See also their listing of 'fundamental and basic values for Chinese people' taken from Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 18, no. 2 (June 1987), "Chinese Values and the Search for Culture-Free Dimensions of Culture," by 'The Chinese Culture Connection.'

[116]"Culturgram, Taiwan (Republic of China)" in Culturgrams: The Nations Around Us, Vol II, ed. Lynn Tyler, (Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1987), no page given.

[117]"Mind Your Manners", Myanmar country travel study, Internet, World Wide Web. Peter Harvey explains this practice. "Within a shrine-room or the compound surrounding a Stupa or bodhi-tree, humility is also shown by not wearing shoes; for in ancient times, wearing shoes was a sign of wealth and status." Harvey, p. 173.

(3) Practice respect and civility. Defer to those of higher status and age.[118] Observe those who bow when greeting. It is an act which "acknowledges someone else as having more experience of life or spiritual practice." The attitude portrayed is one of respect and humility.[119]

Conclusion

> "To give the feeling of an alien religion it is necessary to do more than expound its concepts and describe its history. One must catch its emotional undertone, enter sympathetically into its sentiments, feel one's way into its symbols, its cult, its art, and then seek to impart these things not merely by scientific exposition but in all sorts of indirect ways."[120]

Buddhism sustains different ethnic and linguistic communities throughout Asia. Soldiers--whether in large task forces or small special forces units--continually deploy to these cultures. Through contact with host nation personnel and civilians, these deploying soldiers can 'catch the emotional undertones' of Buddhist thought. Unit ministry teams--in their role as teachers and advisors--can competently assist units taking part in such ventures.

Using this guide as a broad foundation, UMTs can glean additional specific area/country information from many readily available resources.[121] The impact: soldiers who can "use their

---

[118]Harvey, p. 173.

[119]Ibid.

[120]Dr. J.B. Pratt, The Pilgrimage of Buddhism, as cited in Humphreys, p. 9.

[121]Resources such as Internet contacts and World Wide Web homepages; Eerdman's Handbook to World Religions, Pierce Boaver, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982); CD ROM Encarta

brains...[and] deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures;"[122]

commanders who are informed on religious issues within a

mission's area of operation; and chaplains who are a credible

part of the unit and country they serve.

Encyclopedia; World Almanac, 1996, Robert Famighetti ed.,
(Mahwah, New Jersey: Funk and Wagnalls, 1996); Area Handbook
Series (Headquarters, Department of Army, DA Pam 550s); Quarterly
Country Reports; and insight gained from unit intelligence
personnel.

[122]Toeffler, p. 74.

Terms

Amitabha (ah-mee-TAH-bah):   Buddha, as a bodhisattva, "made a series of vows to create a paradise of unmatched magnificence for those who depended on him completely for salvation and expressed their trust by invocation of his name..."

Abhidharma (uh-bee-DAHR-muh):   Commentary or doctrine.

Anatman: "Devoid of self...[indicates] the Buddhist view that everything is transient and insubstantial, being without underlying reality or...continuing substrate."

Arhant (AHR-huht): One who is 'deserving, worthy'. At death will be released from rebirth in samsara.

Ashoka ('uh-SHOH-kuh', 274-236):   'Asoka the fierce' following his conquests during the Kalinga war. King Asoka's positive example as 'Asoka the righteous' continues to influence political leaders in Buddhist countries today.

Bhiksu/Bhiksuni (BIK-sh*oo*/BIK-sh*oo*ne): Two of many terms for monks and nuns.

Bodhicittas: Thoughts or mind intent upon enlightenment.

Bodhidharma (boh-dee-DAHR-muh):   Late fifth century patriarch who introduced Buddhism into China.

Bodhisattvas (boh-dee-SAHT-vah):   Opened attainment of the Buddha path to everyone. Compassion and acting on behalf of others, exemplified by bodhisattvas, acquired a renewed emphasis. Mahayana concept.

Bodhi Tree (BOH-dee): A type of fig tree under which Gautama Buddha was enlightened. Collectively, this tree commemorates the Buddha's enlightenment and is considered worthy of honor and worship.

Buddha (B*OO*-duh): Title for 'enlightened one'.

Cakravartin: Wheel-rolling ruler.

Ch'an: ('chahn,' Japanese 'Zen') school: While never overlooking literary tradition, ritual, discipline, regimen, extreme intensity and concentration (more 'gradual' practice), Ch'an nevertheless advocates a sudden, speedy, 'unmediated' enlightenment. The innate Buddha nature within allows all to have the potential to achieve this awakening.

Circumambulation: Walking around while meditating or worshiping. Usually one walks counterclockwise, often around a temple or shrine.

Dana: Gifts by the laity which acquire merit.

Dharma (DAHR-muh):   Doctrine.

Dharmaraja: Righteous ruler.

Four 'Holy or Noble Truths':   Enable humankind to find peace with themselves and the world: pain, the origin of pain, the destruction of pain, and the eightfold holy way that leads to the quieting of pain.

Gautama (GOW-tuh-muh):   Buddha's family name.

Guru (G00-roo):   Serves as a mentor, liturgical meditation, personal guide in the Tantra school of thought.

Hinayana ('hin-ah-YAH-nah,' lesser):   Pejorative term, sometimes describes Theravada.   "The term (Hinayana) should be avoided except in citations of polemical writings."

Jataka (JAH-tuh-kuh):   Nikaya texts (like Aesop's fables), telling of Gautama's previous lives.

Karma (KAHR-muh):   'Action/intention/deed.'

Koans: Part of the literary tradition of Ch'an.   These 'public document' sayings and dialogues of the masters, are short, pithy verses.

Ksatriya (warrior class):   Class Buddha was born into.

Law of Karma: 'Every action, every deed, has a result'--both in the short term and over the long haul.

Lotus: Flower, female organ.

Mahasiddhas (mah-hah-SI-dah):   Unconventional, enlightened, 'wandering about' compassionate masters.

Mahayana (mah-hah-YAH-nah):   Great vehicle or course, is associated with Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam.   Also called northern Buddhism, it includes the Pure Land, Ch'an (chahn) and Tantra (TUHN-truh) trends of thought.

Mandalas: Cosmic representation in the form of geometric shapes printed on hangings.

Mantras (MAHN-truh):   Meditational devices serving as instruments of the mind.

Middle Path: Accentuates the 'humanity' of the Buddhist ethic. Universal norms are constant but must be applied in the most suitable way, adapted to the varying circumstances of life...Avoiding extremes--either an overt pursuit of passionate world desire, or an austere discipline practiced by ascetics--enables individuals throughout the culture to exhibit moderation and grace.

Mudra (MOOD-rah): Seal, sign, hand gesture.

'namu amida butsu': 'praise and homage to Amitabha Buddha'.

Nembutsu (nem-boo-tsoo): Involves hearing the name 'Amitabha Buddha', reciting the 'namu amida butsu'.

Nikayas (nee-KAH-yuh): "Thus have I heard..." early sayings of Ananda, one of Buddha's disciples, are the earliest form of Buddhist texts.

Nirvana (nihr-VAH-nuh): Difficult term, "unalloyed bliss, pure and simple, 'fully passed away,' 'fully blown out' or 'fully extinct.'"

Pagoda: Many roofed Buddhist shrine.

Pali (pah-lee) canon: Oldest grouping of texts, forms the basis of Theravada and subsequent movements.

Paritta: Protective chants

Patimokkha: Monastic rules.

Prajna (PRAHJ-nah): Right views and right thought (intention), wisdom.

Pure Land: Most popular form of Buddhism in the world, identifies a goal for rebirth, the 'land of bliss' (Pure Land or Western Paradise).

Refuge: Does not refer to a place of hiding, rather to something "the thought of which purifies, uplifts and strengthens the heart."

Sakyamuni: Refers to Buddha's clan (his being a 'sage of the Sakya clan').

Samadhi (suh-MAH-dee): "To cultivate meditative calm and one pointed attention," categorizes right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

Samsara (sahm-SHA-ruh): Sanskrit term, refers to the cycle of rebirth and redeath--a turning around continually--experienced by all life.

Sangha (SAHN-guh):   Specialists in the spiritual life.   These monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen, follow rules of the codified monastic discipline (Vinaya).

Shen-hui ('Shen-hway', 668-760):   Monk who became the seventh patriarch, promoted the Ch'an school.

Siddhartha (sid-HAHR-tah):   Buddha's personal name.

Sila: Describes moral rules to purify and begin transformation of one's nature, increasing self-insight and mindfulness. Sila groups together right speech, right conduct and right livelihood.

Stupa (STOO-puh):   Dome-shaped burial mound, honoring Buddhas and past clerics.

Tantra (THUN-truh):   Practice following a direct route from India to Tibet, by-passing China.   Duality is central to understanding Tantra texts (from 'taut thread'), which are a network of teachings, incantations and esoteric sayings.

Tathagata (tuh-TAH-guh-tuh): 'Thus come one'.   Suggests Gautama Buddha walked the path he proclaimed.

Theravada (thai-ruh-VAH-duh):   Most conservative, traditional school of Buddhism.   Also called the 'southern' social movement, this tradition goes back to one of the original eighteen schools--the tradition of the elders.   Southeast Asia--Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Kampuchea--and Sri Lanka is home to this practice.

Three Treasures (Three Jewels):   Taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma (the law, truth or doctrine), and Sangha, lead to the avoidance of pain.

Threefold Training: Classifies practices of the eightfold path. It consists of morality (Sila), wisdom (Prajna) and concentration (Samadhi).

Tripataka (Three Baskets):   Composed of Sutras (discourses, scriptures), Vinaya ('VI-nuh-yuh,' discipline for the Sangha) and Abhidharma ('uh-bee-DAHR-muh,' commentary or doctrine).

True Pure Land: Practice of Shinran (shin-rahn).   The compassionate Amitabha Buddha became a 'savior figure,' carrying awakened ones to the Pure Land.

Vajra (VAH-jrah):   Thunderbolt, diamond, sword, male organ.

Vajrayana (vuhj-ruh-YAH-nuh):   Tantra literature, contrasting masculine diamond/sword/thunderbolt images with feminine lotus flower depictions.

Vinaya (VI-nuh-yuh): Monastic discipline.

Wesak: Celebration of Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and final
   demise. All Buddhists join in this celebration.

Yogi(n)/Yogini: One who practices yoga meditation (male and
   female).

Bibliography

Abe, Masao, "Buddhism", <u>Our Religions,</u> ed., Arvind Sharma, New
    York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Appleton, George, ed., <u>Oxford Book of Prayer</u>, New York: Oxford,
    1985.

Beversluis, Joel, <u>A Sourcebook for Earth's Community of
    Religions</u>, New York: Global Education Associates, 1995.

Bishop, Peter, and Michael Darton, eds., <u>The Encyclopedia of
    World Faiths</u>, New York: Facts on File Publications, 1987.

Boyd, Morris J., "Peace Operations: A Capstone Doctrine,"
    <u>Military Review</u>, May-June 1995.

Braaten, Carl, <u>No Other Gospel</u>, Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress,
    1992.

Conze, Edward, <u>Buddhist Texts</u>, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964,
    <u>Buddhist World of Thought and Practice</u>, REL 225, Professor
    Teiser, Fall 1995.

Davis, Charles, <u>Religion and the Making of Society</u>, New York:
    Cambridge Press, 1994.

De Mente, Boye, <u>Behind the Japanese Bow</u>, Lincolnwood, Ill:
    Passport Books, 1993.

Dreifus, Claudia, "The Passion of Suu Kyi", <u>The New York Times
    Magazine</u>, 7 Jan. 1996, pages 32-37.

Dumoulin, Heinrich, ed., <u>Buddhism in the Modern World</u>, New York:
    Collier, 1976.

Eliade, Mircea, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, Vol. 2, New
    York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987.

Field Manual 16-1, <u>Religious Support</u>, Washington, D.C.: U.S.
    Government Printing Office, 1995.

Field Manual 100-5, <u>Operations,</u> Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government
    Printing Office, 1993.

Fisher, R. E. <u>Buddhist Art and Architecture</u>, Singapore: Thames
    and Hudson, 1993.

Gombrich, E.H., <u>The Story of Art</u>, New York: Phaidon, 1973.

Harris, Ian, John Shepherd, Paul Morris, Stuart Mews, eds.,
    <u>Contemporary Religions: A World Guide</u>, Harlow, Essex, UK:
    Longman Group, UK, 1992.

Harvey, Peter, <u>An Introduction to Buddhism</u>, Cambridge: Cambridge
    University Press, 1990.

Hastings, James, <u>Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics</u>, Edinburgh:
    T. and T. Clark, Scholar Press Reprint, 1981.

Hendry, Joy, <u>Wrapping Culture</u>, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Hirota, Dennis, <u>Tannisho: A Primer</u>, Kyoto, Japan: Ryukoku
    University, 1982, <u>Buddhist World of Thought and Practice</u>, REL
    225, Professor Teiser, Fall 1995.

Humphreys, Christmas, <u>Buddhism</u>, London: Penguin, 1969.

Johnston, D. and Cynthia Sampson, eds., <u>Religion, The Missing
    Dimension in Statecraft,</u> New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994.

Juergensmeyer, Mark, <u>The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism
    Confronts the Secular State,</u> Berkeley, Calif: Univ. of Calif.
    Press, 1993.

May, Joanna Rogers, "Dependent Co-Arising: The Distinctiveness of
    Buddhist Ethics", <u>Journal of Religious Ethics</u>, Spring 1979,
    Vol. 7/1, pages 38-52.

Melton, J. Gordon, Project Director, <u>Religious Requirements and
    Practices</u> (A Handbook for Chaplains), Washington, D.C.:
    Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains,
    @1991.

Muller, F. Max, (trans), <u>Buddhist Mahayana Texts,</u> New York: Dover
    Publications, 1969, reprint of 1894, <u>Buddhist World of Thought
    and Practice</u>, REL 225, Professor Teiser, Fall 1995.

Neeley, Alan, <u>Christian Mission,</u> Maryknoll, New York: Orbis,
    1995.

O'Brien, Joanne, and Martin Palmer, eds., <u>The State of Religion
    Atlas</u>. New York: Touchstone, 1993.

Rahula, Walpola, <u>What the Buddha Taught</u>, New York: Grove Press,
    1974.

Robinson, Richard and Willard Johnson, <u>The Buddhist Religion A
    Historical Introduction</u>, Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth, 1982.

Sakai, Hiroshi, "The Living Art of Japan", College of Marin,
    California, flier on 'sumi-e' art, @1985.

Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>,
    New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Snelling, John, <u>The Buddhist Handbook</u>, London: Century
    Hutchinson, 1987.

Spence, David, Multi Faith Calendar, (Wofford Heights, Calif:
  Multi Faith Resources, 1996).

Spiro, Melford, Buddhism and Society, Berkeley: Univ. of Calif.
  Press, 1982.

Stryk, Lucien, World of the Buddha, New York: Grove Weidenfeld,
  1968.

Swearer, Donald K., Buddhism and Society in Southeast Asia,
  Chambersburg, Pa: Anima, 1981.

Tambiah, S,J., World Conqueror and World Renouncer, New York:
  Cambridge, 1976.

Tambiah, Stanley, Buddhism Betrayed, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago
  Press, 1992.

Teiser, Steven, Lecture Notes, REL 225, "The Buddhist World of
  Thought and Practice", Princeton University, Fall Semester,
  1995-96.

Toeffler, Alvin and Heidi, War and Anti-War, Boston, Mass:
  Little, Brown and Company, 1993.

Turner, B. Kali, Multi-Faith Information Manual, Toronto,
  Ontario: Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious
  Care, 1995.

Tyler, Lynn, Culturgrams II, Garrett Park, Md: Garrett Park
  Press, 1987.

Wenzhong, Wu and Cornelius Grove, Encountering the Chinese,
  Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991.

Islam: Outline

Islam Chronology

ca. 570 - 632	-- Muhammad.
580 - 634	-- Abu Bakr.
605 - 633	-- Fatima.
622	-- Muhammad emigrates to Medina (hijra), founding of Muslim community (ummah muslimah), year one (AH) of Muslim calendar.
624	-- Battle of Badr.
627 - 669	-- Hasan ibn Ali.
632 - 634	-- Abu Bakr, first caliph.
632 - 641	-- Rapid Muslim expansion, including Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and parts of north Africa.
661	-- Ali assassinated.
661 - 750	-- Ummayad caliphate.
673	-- First Muslim attack on Constantinople.
692	-- Completion of Dome of the Rock (Jerusalem).
700 - 711	-- North Africa under Muslim control.
704 - 767	-- Ibn Ishaq, compiler of first life of Muhammad.
712	-- Expansion to borders of India and central Asian steppes (Samarkand).
732	-- Charles Martel defeats Muslims at Poitiers, halting invasion of France.
756	-- Cordoba becomes capital of Muslim Spain, Europe's largest city by the 10th century.
909 - 1171	-- Ismaili Fatamid dynasty of North Africa and Egypt.
994 - 1064	-- Ibn Hassan.
1095 - 1099	-- First Crusade; Jerusalem captured by Christians.
1121 - 1269	-- Berber Almohad dynasty.
1175	-- Muizzudin Muhammad founds first Muslim empire in India.

1187	--	Saladin recaptures Jerusalem from Christians.
1206	--	Sultanate of Delhi established.
1380 - 1918	--	Ottoman (Turkish) Empire.
ca. 1298-1448	--	Kabir.
1492	--	Christians conquer Granada, last stronghold of Islam in Spain.
1502 - 1609	--	Forced conversion to Catholicism of Spanish Muslims.
1526 - 1857	--	Mughal dynasty in India.
1593 - 1605	--	Habsburg and Ottoman 'Long War.'
1632 - 1654	--	Taj Mahal constructed by Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan.
1683	--	Decisive battle near Vienna ends Muslim European expansion.
ca. 1840-85	--	Muhammad Ahmad ('the Madhi').
1869	--	Suez Canal.
1881 - 1938	--	Mustafa Kamal Ataturk.
1902 - 1989	--	Ruhollah Khomenei.
1928	--	Formation of Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt).
1947	--	Pakistan independence.
1948 - 1949	--	First Arab-Israeli war.
1971	--	Bangladesh becomes independent.
1979	--	Shah of Iran exiled; Iranian revolution.
1982	--	Hezbollah (Hizb Allah) founded in Lebanon.

Area of the Religion

"Only by understanding these religiopolitical issues to the fullest extent possible can U.S. policy deal effectively with religiously influenced states or with fundamentalist movements."[1]

"The best approach is to consider each religion, to try to understand it, to try patiently to explain it to oneself, avoiding useless attacks, in the awareness that God has ways which are not ours."[2]

Our culture is often unfriendly to Muslims.[3] Stereotypes,

based on oversimplifications, false conceptions, and inaccurate

information, deeply offend Muslim neighbors--whether living next

door or across the seas.[4] Offensive characterizations continue

past centuries of xenophobic reaction.[5] Fueled by the media[6] and

---

[1]D. Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), p. 29.

[2]Jacques Jomier, How to Understand Islam, (NY: Crossroad, 1991), p. 3.

[3]Marston Speight, God is One: The Way of Islam, (New York: Friendship Press, 1989), p. 10.

[4]Ibid., Introduction. The following is also helpful. "News reports and political analysis of more recent disputes involving Muslim populations, such as...the U.S.-led Allied war against Iraq ('Desert Storm,' 1991), have contributed to a climate of negative information and disinformation about Arabs and Muslim peoples more generally...There is a need for more nuanced understanding of the increasing amount of information, much of it still inaccurate, about Islam. Speaking and writing responsibly about Islam is a task facing students and teachers, reporters in the print and broadcast media, government officials..." HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, ed J.Z. Smith, (San Francisco, Calif: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 498, 500.

[5]"...dominant reaction of Western Christendom towards Islam remained violently xenophobic [fear of foreigners or strangers]. The majority view was that Muslims were subhuman brutes, diabolically inspired, and unworthy of the rights and considerations due to mankind...The new European stereotypes of the Muslim--the decadent and fabulously rich oil sheikh of the 1970s; the fanatic ayatollah, spattered with the book of martyrs, of the 1980s--are no more representative of mundane reality than

politicized by violence, the resulting framework is one where 'overheated imaginaries' confront each other in polemic, often irrational terms.[7]

Lest we think we are immune to such characteristics, we need to ask ourselves: 'What comes to mind upon hearing the words Muhammad, Islam, the Qur'an?'[8] Negative judgments, critical opinions and immediate distaste too often are our initial response.

In part, this study attempts to realign our thinking, to enable us to understand, appreciate, and look for the ennobling values of the Muslim world.[9] This section on area religion focuses on introductory terms, an historical sketch of the world of Islam, and a broad look at areas of our globe influenced by this religion.

---

was the blood-thirsty and licentious pagan of medieval legend."
(Jeremy Johns, "Christianity and Islam," in The Oxford
Illustrated History of Christianity, ed. John McManners, New
York: Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 193, 194.

[6]Mohammad Arkoun, Rethinking Islam, Robert D. Lee.,
(Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), p. 86. "...media in
the West seize upon this monolithic, fundamentalist view of
Islam...and transpose it into a discourse suitable to the social
imaginary of Western countries without any intermediate critique
from the social sciences." The result is a "confrontation of two
'overheated imaginaries' by accumulated confusions about each
other."

[7]"...tone and the imagery--ancient in origin but enriched
every day--that serves to feed a powerful Western imaginary of
this far-off world, so different, hostile, violent, and backward
yet so very near both geographically and even socially." Ibid, p.
7.

[8]Speight, p. 10.

[9]"...embraces the recognition of positive values, the
acceptance of differences, and the sensitivity to know how and
when these differences may be talked about without sacrificing
any essential aspect of faith." Jomier, p. 3.

Before continuing, definition of the following terms is
helpful.

* **Islam:** "...peace attained by submission to the will of the
one God."[10]

* **Muslim** (M*OOS*-lim):[11] "...refers to someone who acts in
loving obedience to God, exemplified by Abraham's gesture in
agreeing to God's request to sacrifice his son."[12]

* **Umma** (OOM-muh): "...the totality of people who are Muslims
and compose the Islamic world."[13]

* **Dar al-Islam** (dahr ul-is-LAM): "...the Islamic
world...those territories guided by Islamic law."[14]

* **Qur'an** (koo-RAHN): "...the authoritative text, the
Muslim's record of God's revelation to Muhammad."[15]

* **Muhammad** (moo-HAM-mad): The founder of Islam who lived
@570-632).

Already within the pre-Islamic world, Mecca was an urban

---

[10]Lecture notes, Dr. Sydney Griffith, "Islam--Christian
Encounter," 25 Sept. 1995, Princeton Theological Seminary.

[11]I follow the pronunciation guide as used in the
HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion. Please refer to Tab A for
the key to pronunciation.

[12]To see societies "as Muslim rather than Islamic to say
that they are inhabited largely by Muslims. The use of 'Islamic'
to describe highly diverse societies must be avoided." Arkoun, p.
16. "Those who submit--who 'fear God and obey His messengers,'
which scripture, the Qur'an, frequently admonishes humans to do--
are known as Muslims." HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, ed.
J.Z. Smith, p. 498.

[13]The Umma is not a single ethnic, racial or cultural group
(Qur'an 44:13), rather a totality, a "global destiny." There is
a strong sense of brotherhood, a strong bond of brotherhood and
sisterhood...within the single religious community. "...hold
fast, all of you together, to the cable of God and do not
separate." Qur'an 3:103. See Seyyed Nasr, "Islam," in Our
Religions, ed., Arvind Sharma, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995),
p. 434.

[14]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 306.

[15]Ibid., p. 514.

center of religious significance.[16]   A pre-Islamic pilgrimage

focused on the holy mountain of Arafat.[17]   In Mecca, the Kaaba

(KAH bah), of unknown origin, was an object of religious

veneration from earliest times.[18]   Southern Arab trade routes,

bringing together the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, set a

stage for the rapid advance of Islam throughout broad sections of

the then-known world.[19]

Mecca's geographical position "on the spice route, half-way

between Jewish Yathrib (Medina 'ma-DEE-nuh'--city of the Prophet

Muhammad) and Christian Najran (400 miles south east of Mecca

'MAK-kuh'), naturally exposed it to the two currents of economic

and religious life which were running in western Arabia."[20]

Thus, Islam was "born into a multi-religious world, in dialogue

with Christianity and Judaism from the start."[21]   The disunity of

---

[16]"The primacy of Mecca as well as the unity of the Arabs
was reflected and promoted annually during the Sacred Months when
the Arabs would flock to Mecca and the neighboring region, where
a complex of three places and many activities were involved:
'Ukaz, the fair and scene of poetic contests; Mecca, the Holy
City with its Haram, the sacred precinct, and its Kaaba, the
temple; and Arafat, the Holy Mountain of the pilgrimage." P.M.
Holt, Ann K.S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, eds., Cambridge
History of Islam, Vol. I, "Central Islamic Lands," (Cambridge:
Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970), p. 24.

[17]"The pre-Islamic Pilgrimage...ensured...a permanent and
privileged place in the consciousness of the Muslim world..."
Ibid., p. 27.

[18]"Built at the navel of the earth by the prototype of all
true worship, Abraham, it [Kaaba] had long been degraded by pagan
rites the purging of which was to be the burden of Muhammad's
call." Kenneth Cragg, Readings in the Qur'an, (London: Collins,
1988), p. 20.

[19]Holt, p. 16.

[20]Ibid., p. 23.

[21]Notes, Dr. Griffith, 18 Sept., 1995.

Mid-Eastern Christendom in the mid-sixth century, where Christians 'anathematized' each other over the person of Christ, could hardly have gone unnoticed by Muhammad.[22]

Islam saw itself as a continuation of a 'primordial monotheism,' that is, Islam continued the primitive, simple faith initiated with Adam.[23] Within the context of straightforward faith, Muhammad was within the progression of the prophets.[24] Moses received the Torah; Jesus the Gospel; and Muhammad the Qur'an. Abraham's extended history included Muhammad.[25] Even the Christian-Jewish Scriptures predicted his presence.[26]

Born into the Quraysh clan, Muhammad was orphaned at an early age.[27] He lived a nomadic life being exposed to monastics as he travelled throughout the Mid-East.

---

[22]Ibid.

[23]Nasr in Sharma, p. 429.

[24]Notes, Dr. Griffith, 2 Oct., 1995.

[25]"...Islamic sacred history expanded the biography of Abraham...Hagar and Ishmael were not abandoned by Abraham, but conducted by him to a barren valley (Mecca), where Gabriel opened for them a spring of water (the sacred well of Zamzam), and where Abraham and Ishmael founded a sanctuary (the Kaaba) and established the rites of pilgrimage (hajj)." Johns in McManners, p. 175.

[26]"...to those that keep from evil and give alms, and to those that believe our signs; to those that shall follow the Apostle--the Unlettered Prophet--whom they shall find described in the Torah and the Gospel." Qur'an 7:157. Genesis, 21:18; 49:9-10; Isaiah 21:7; and John 14:16,26 are all seen as predicting, in some way, the Prophet Muhammad. Notes, Dr. Griffith, 2 Oct. 1995.

[27]"Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter? Did He not find you in error and guide you? Did He not find you poor and enrich you? Therefore do not wrong the orphan, nor chide away the beggar. But proclaim the goodness of your Lord." (Qur'an 93:6-11). The Quraysh clan was responsible for the care of the Kaaba.

Six areas of the world fall under the sweep of Islamic influence. (1) Arabic areas: Composed of less than a fifth of the entire Muslim population (200 million people), this area is important due to its historic association with Muslim origins, its language--that of the Qur'an--and the sacred sights.[28]

(2) Persian presence: 100 million adherents in present day Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, parts of Uzbekistan and Pakistan, (plus the Kurds) make up this grouping. The Persians built classical Islamic civilization, becoming the artistic and intellectual center of the Muslim world. After Arabic, the Persian language is the most important Islamic language.

(3) Indian subcontinent: A majority presence in Bangladesh, with minorities in Sri Lanka, Nepal and India totals 350 million people. Mission oriented Sufi orders and Muslim traders brought Islam to this area in the 12 and 13th centuries.

(4) Turkic people: Home to the Ottoman empire, the 150 million adherents from the Balkans to eastern Siberia created "the last powerful Islamic empire, which stood up to the West until the present century."[29]

(5) Sub-Sahara Africa: Since Muhammad's time, when Bilal, an African, called the Prophet to prayer, Islam has had an interest and presence in Africa. 100 million followers of Muhammad are found in this area of Africa.

(6) South East Asia: In the 13th century, Sufi teachers, pious merchants, and members of the Prophet's family who married

----

[28]This paper expresses an 'Arab bias.' I deal very little with Islamic presence elsewhere.

[29]Nasr in Sharma, p. 493.

into Malay royalty, spread Islam in this area. The 180 million
practitioners in Indonesia, Malaysia, S. Philippines and
minorities elsewhere often practice a more syncretistic strain of
Islam.[30]

Clergy/Leadership

"Islam being a religion of lay people without
priesthood...a society in which all the members enjoy equal
religious status."[31]

"Let the People of the Book know that they have no
control over the grace of God; that grace is in His hands
alone, and that He vouchsafes it to whom He will. God's
grace is infinite."[32]

To become part of the Muslim religion--a community offering
equality of status before God--individuals follow the Five
Pillars. Although there are no clergy as such, there are learned
elites, community leaders, and public officials who promote and
ensure good moral behavior in society. The secular/sacred
division is absent in traditional Islam. Political and spiritual
leadership is often combined in the same person.

Leadership centers around the ulama (oo-la-mah). These
learned men are responsible for interpreting divine law and
administering Islamic society. Some of the ulama are experts in
the study of sacred texts, the tradition associated with exegesis
of the Qur'an, and the hadith ('hah-DEETH': tradition of what
Muhammad and his companions said and did). Theology, law, and
mysticism are also part of the 'curriculum' for individuals
desiring to become part of this select group. Ulama personnel

---

[30]Ibid., pp. 484-503.

[31]Jomier, p. 58.

[32]Qur'an 57:29.

serve as teachers, preachers, market-inspectors, judges,
notaries, and in various state positions--as scribes,
secretaries, and royal counsels.[33] Even in states where secular
law is in effect, the cooperation of the ulama is necessary for
successful government.

A wide variety of other titled men can make up the ulama.
An imam (i-MAHM) leads prayers for the faithful. At times, imams
also derive authority from their abilities in religious
scholarship. Katib describes one who performs preacherly duties.
The muezzin (moo-uh-*TH-thin*) is the crier who calls worshippers
to prayer. Fatwa (FAT wuh), formal decisions given on legal,
moral or doctrinal questions, are presented by mufti, scholars in
Islamic law. Often the procedures for arriving at consensus are
complex and intricate. Mujahidun (moo-ja-hid-OON) are present
day activists who seek to revive Islamic society.

Mullahs are local Shi'ite 'men of religion'. In sub-Sahara
Africa, mullahs are called malems.[34] An ayatollah (A yat-*ool-*
LAH) is one who achieves the highest level of leadership in the
Shia community, through extensive academic study.

Historically, caliphs (KAY lif) provided religious and civil
leadership to Muslim communities from 632 to the mid-thirteenth
century. In actuality, kings, sultans and the ulama took over
caliph powers from the ninth century onward.[35]

'Friends of God' or popular saints are called wali (wa-LEE)

---

[33]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 1106.

[34]Jomier, p. 151.

[35]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 176.

or marabouts. Locals often see these holy individuals as possessing spiritual/mystical powers. They seek out their prayers and blessings. Though condemned by 'orthodox' Islam, pilgrimages to these living saints or visits to the tombs of their dead still occur.[36]

We find three major schools of thought--the Sunni (SOON nee), Shia (SHEE uh) and Sufi (SOO fee)--within the Muslim world. The origin of these different groups--especially the Sunni and Shia schools--centers more on political viewpoint than dogma. A resolution to the political question 'who leads at the death of Muhammad?' defined the differences in these two movements.

Sunni elders saw Muhammad's successor as being chosen by the community of those who follow the Sunnah (SOON nuh) or ethical/religious Muslim path. Authority thus rests in the community, guided by ulama consensus and Islamic law. Leaders do not take on the 'mantle of Muhammad.' Rather they protect and defend Islam, seeking to apply God's law to society. Sunnis believe the Sharia ('sha-REE ah': the religious law of Islam) was codified and closed by the 10th century. Approximately 85% of the Muslim world follows the Sunni branch.[37]

Shia followers believe Muhammad specified that his cousin and son-in-law Ali would be his successor.[38] The charisma of

---

[36]Arkoun, p. 66.

[37]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 1035.

[38]Sunni successors of Muhammad included Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656), and Ali (656-661). During Umar's caliphate, Muslim conquest of the Christian Near-East took place. Qur'an canonization came about under Uthman's leadership. Shia followers see Ali as the first Imam. Ali's son Hasan, the second Imam, abdicated to his younger brother Husayn ibn Ali

Muhammad passed on in direct 'blood' lineage through a family

dynasty. Religious and political authority rests in imams alone.

The Sharia is always open, subject to fresh reformulations of

Sunna, Hadith and Qur'an interpretations. Found in Iran, south

Iraq and parts of Lebanon, the Shia branch makes up around 15% of

the Muslim community.

Mystical/spiritual intensity centers in Sufism. "Like the

heart of the body of Islam--invisible from the outside but giving

nourishment to the whole organism," Sufi pietism exerts a major

influence.[39] Recalling the austere life of early Mecca and

Medina, Sufis often practice ascetic ways. Living in the

presence of God, being 'absorbed into God,' is often experienced

through intense renderings of scripture, poetry or music.

Ecstatic, mystical states often result.[40]

(hoo-SAYN ibn AH lee). Husayn led a struggle against Yazid, an
Umayyad ruler. On the banks of the Euphrates (Karbala 'KAR ba-
luh'), Husayn, his 70 followers and all but one son died on the
day of ashura (ah-shoo-RA), October 680. The Shia "ethos of
suffering and martyrdom and an inspiration for poetry, and drama,
liturgy and devotion" stems from this event. HarperCollins
Dictionary of Religion, p. 472.
     Ali's wife Fatima (FAT-ti-mah), Muhammad's daughter, was the
mother of Hasan and Husayn. The ancestor of all of Muhammad's
descendants, she is venerated by Muslims--especially of the Shia
movement. Ibid., p 358.

[39]Nasr in Sharma, p. 467.

[40]The hierarchical structure of Sufism includes Islam
(surrender), Iman ('ee-MAHN,' faith) and Ihsan (beauty). The
first level includes all Muslims--those who surrender to God's
revelation, the Qur'an. Iman defines those who possess an
intensity of faith--internal conviction, verbal witness and
authentic action--which set them apart. Those who possess Ihsan
have a high level of spiritual perfection, a constant awareness
of God's presence. See Nasr in Sharma, p. 470.

Belief

> "Believers, conduct yourselves with justice and bear
> true witness before God, even though it be against
> yourselves, your parents, or your kinfolk. Believers, have
> faith in God and His apostle, in the Book He has revealed to
> His apostle, and in the Scriptures He formerly revealed. He
> that denies God, His angels, His Scriptures, His apostles,
> and the Last Day has gone far astray."
>
> -- Qur'an 4:135, 136[41]

The first pillar of faith, the essential 'creed' of Muslim

belief, unites all Muslims. Called the shahada, is states,

"There is not god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God."

Said with heartfelt intent and belief before two official

witnesses, this testimony welcomes the Muslim into legal standing

as a member of the Islamic community. Repeatedly invoked as a

part of daily prayer, the shahada serves as a constant reminder

of essential faith.[42]

Basic Muslim beliefs cluster around the following headings:

God, angels, revealed books, prophet-messengers, last things and

the Divine Decree.[43]

God. "Say: 'God is One, the Eternal God. He begot none,

nor was he begotten. None is equal to Him.'" (Qur'an 112.) This

---

[41]Jacques Jomier, How to Understand Islam, (New York:
Crossroad, 1991), p. 38 for further texts expressing the faith of
the Muslim.

[42]The apparent simplicity of Muslim belief does not mean it
lacks depth. "Those who thus judge Muslim faith [as shallow and
elementary] have never pored over the vast collections of legal
and theological books, the encyclopedias and dictionaries, the
commentaries and poetry, the instructional manuals and
guidebooks, the histories and biographies that Muslims, inspired
by their beliefs, have produced in every century." Speight, p.
10.

[43]Jomier, pp. 38-48.

"uncomplicated absoluteness for God," as found in the Qur'an, sets Islam apart from the secular climate of the industrialized world.[44] The God of Islam is one, the "eternal, creator, omnipotent, who sees all and knows all, infinitely good and merciful, who is harsh on those who oppose him, who forgives those who ask him but punishes the wicked severely."[45]

The Muslim 'world and life view' sees no secular/sacred division. Life "is a unified whole under the one God. All duties are religious duties in the broad, inclusive sense."[46] Care for God's created world--a divine trust and trusteeship given to humankind--is one of the important duties stressed throughout the Qur'an.[47]

Humankind is created in the 'image'[48] of God. "Human beings have received the imprint of God upon the very substance of their souls and cannot evade religion any more than they can avoid breathing."[49] According to the Qur'an, God has breathed into us His Spirit (15:29.) "To be human is to carry this Spirit at the depth of one's being...to be concerned with religion and the

---

[44]Kenneth Cragg, Readings in the Qur'an, (London: Collins, 1991), p. 61.

[45]Jomier, p. 39.

[46]Speight, p. 30.

[47]Cragg, p. 33.

[48]"image...sura of God...Here sura means the reflection of God's Names and Qualities, for otherwise God is formless and imageless." Seyyed Nasr, "Islam" in Our Religions, ed. Arvind Sharma, (San Francisco, Calif: Harper, 1993), p. 444.

[49]Ibid.

author of all religion."[50]

Angels. Islam possesses a "lively faith in the invisible world."[51] Gabriel (Jibril), who brought down the Qur'an, is the most important angel. Other invisible beings (jinns), some good, some evil, possess extraordinary powers[52] (see the Qur'an, sura 72).

Revealed Books. Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad all transmitted literally the respective books dictated to them--the Torah, Psalms, Gospel[53] and Qur'an. All are authoritative, though the Qur'an--due to its sure text, breadth of scope and transmission manner--in practice is Islam's primary book.

The Qur'an, the 'text from on high,' is the word of God. Everything about the Qur'an is sacred--its sounds, words, letters, even parchment and paper.[54] Verses of the Qur'an are the first sounds a new child hears and the last a dying person listens to. The art of chanting the Qur'an, the "supreme sacred act of Islam...moves Muslims to tears, whether Arabs or

---

[50]Ibid. Kenneth Cragg amplifies this view of our status in God's world. "It lies in the Qur'an's summons to a reverent, grateful and sustained acknowledgement of God as the clue, within the natural order and on the stage of history, to the real dignity and destiny of mankind." Cragg, p. 72.

[51]Jomier, p. 41.

[52]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, ed. J.Z. Smith, p. 573.

[53]In Islamic thought, our gospels are not the original gospels--as their content differs from the Qur'an. Muslims interpret four gospels as evidence of this discrepancy. Notes, Dr. Griffith, 1 Oct., 1995.

[54]Nasr in Sharma, p. 448.

Malays."[55]   We cannot overlook the centrality of the Qur'an for

Muslim belief.[56]

To capture the full beauty of the Qur'an, one must hear it

recited in its original Arabic.   As scholar Kenneth Cragg informs

us,

> "Translations do not convey the emotion, the fervor,
> the mystery the Qur'an holds in the original. Reading the
> Book in the quiet of the study, perusing it with the eye,
> silences the force of the text which properly belongs with
> the ear and the soul...Recital can become for the believer a
> sacramental experience, as organs of speech, tongue, lips
> and vocal cord move with the vowels and consonants, as the
> Prophet's did, of what faith holds to be divine, Arabic
> utterance."[57]

The Qur'an is a prophetic discourse,[58] not written

chronologically,[59] meant to be "consumed" rather than subjected

to scientific examination.[60]   Its style is of the "powerful,

---

[55]Ibid., p. 406.

[56]"The [Qur'an] was the prime inspiration of a religious
movement which gave rise to a civilization of wide extent, vast
power and profound vitality. The literature and fine arts of all
Muslim peoples spring from this fountain head...No man seeking to
live in the same world as Islam can afford to regard lightly, or
to judge ignorantly, the Book that is called The [Qur'an]. It is
among the greatest monuments of mankind. It surely deserves and
demands to be more widely known and better comprehended in the
West." Arberry, The Holy Qur'an, p. 33, as quoted in Cragg, p.
51.

[57]Cragg, pp. 15, 31.

[58]"To know how to read and write requires, indeed, an
exercise of reason quite apart from the improvisation,
inventions, free associations and flashes of thought to be found
in prophetic discourse." Arkoun, p. 44.

[59]"...order of appearance of suras and verses...does not
reflect either chronological or rational, formal criteria. With
minds accustomed to...a method of exposition that must project an
'argument,' Western readers are surprised by the 'disorder' of
the...text." Ibid., p. 38.

[60]Ibid., p. 41.

expansive imaginary of Middle East culture."[61]   Obedience is its

final goal.[62]

Each of the 114 Suras begins "in the name of God,

compassionate, all merciful."[63]   The total text, divided into

thirty parts, allows for daily readings/recitations of one part

for each day of the lunar month.   As the Suras begin with the

longest to shortest, and the latter ones are more event/subject

descriptive, new readers are advised to begin at the back and

work their way forward.[64]

Prophet-Messengers.   Main Biblical figures, plus some

unknown Arabian messengers, are seen as messengers (rasul--

prophets with a specific mission who bring the word) of God.

Muhammad, the 'seal of the prophets,' is the only one with a

universal message.   Abraham and Moses (seen by Muhammad on his

journey to heaven), are the greatest of the Prophet-Messengers.

Muhammad, though not divine, receives highest respect, often in

the form of the saying 'prayer and peace be upon him' said or

---

[61]Ibid., p. 38.

[62]"...the Qur'an is not finally a thing for admiration.   Its
rhetoric and its irony, its imagery and eloquence, are not ends
in themselves.   They are calculated to arouse, to convince, to
warn and to educate...they demand not patronage but obedience."
Cragg, p. 51.

[63]Sura 9 is the lone exception due to its original inclusion
with Sura 8.

[64]Cragg pp. 16, 14.   "...like a pearl for which the diver
must plunge to break the shell which both ensures and conceals
the treasure...the Qur'an...yields itself only to those who
rightly understand."

written after his name.[65]

Last Things. Bodily resurrection, judgment, paradise and hell are the climax of history. Hell is not eternal for the believer, as Muhammad will intercede for those "even possessing an atom of faith."[66] Millennial leaders (Mahdi: MAH dee) will defeat enemies of religion at the end of history, establishing peace and justice on the earth.[67]

Divine Decree. This belief, that everything is decided by God and in some sense comes from Him, articulates a major source of personal contentment and sustainment, especially in times of difficulty. Drawing from Sura 37:96 ("...God who created you and all that you have made...") this decree elaborates the all-powerful nature of God.

---

[65] "...the Prophet [Muhammad is]--not Christ but a human unlike the ordinary for he possesses the most perfect of natures--like the jewel among stones....Love and respect for the prophet is inseparable from love for the Word of God, Qur'an and God Himself." Nasr in Sharma, p. 450.

[66] Jomier, p. 46.

[67] "This eschatological atmosphere which characterized Islamic millennialism, or Mahdiism, was present during the Iranian Revolution of 1979..." Nasr in Sharma p. 516.

Worship

> "The Messenger of God has said: Islam is built on five
> (foundations): the witness that there is no god apart from
> God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God--the
> performing of ritual prayer--the payment of social taxation
> (or legal almsgiving)--the pilgrimage to Mecca--and the fast
> of Ramadan."[68]

Worship consists of practicing, with right intention, the

following five 'pillars,'[69] or devotional acts of Islam.

(1) Shahada--witnessing: This commitment to obey God and

follow the Prophet is summarized in the testimony, "I bear

witness that there is no god but God; I bear witness that

Muhammad is the Prophet of God."

(2) Salat--prayer service: At dawn, midday, mid-afternoon,

sunset and at night, this liturgical prayer is prayed by all

Muslims. Preferably said with a community of the faithful, all

bow towards the Kaaba in Mecca. On Fridays, the masjid (mosque

or place of ritual prostration) or janis (select, set aside

mosque) is the site for collective prayer.

(3) Sawm--fasting: During the month of Ramadan (RAHM ah

dahn), thanksgiving is expressed, discipline shown, and communal

solidarity and reconciliation affirmed through abstaining from

food and drink from dawn to sunset.

(4) Zakat (ZA kat)--almsgiving: The faithful demonstrate

tangible worship by giving 'a kind of loan to God' of from two to

ten percent of their income, payable at year's end. Charitable

---

[68]Tradition (no name or sources given) quoted in Jomier, p.
53.

[69]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, ed. J.Z. Smith, p.
364 or Nasr in Sharma, p. 472.

causes receive support in a more spontaneous manner, as needs arise.

(5) Hajj--pilgrimage: If at all possible, at least once during a lifetime, preferably during the twelfth month of the calendar, a Muslim takes a trip to Mecca.

In some cases, various adherents mention jihad (ji-HAD) as a sixth pillar. Often stereotyped as "holy war," jihad more accurately portrays an 'exertion or struggle' in achieving the ways of God. The concept describes a vigilance "against all that distracts us from God and exertion to do His will within ourselves as well as preserving and reestablishing the order and harmony that He has willed for Islamic society and the world about us."[70]

In its 'lesser' sense, jihad describes legal war--both defensive and offensive. In its 'greater' sense, it is the struggle against inward passions. Included is working to overcome underdevelopment, to counteract propaganda, or to offer cultural resistance to secularization influences.[71]

Ethics/Motivation

"The whole life of Muslims is impregnated by ethical consideration in that Islam does not accept the legitimacy of any domain--whether it be social, political, or economic--as falling outside ethical consideration."[72]

Islam values practice over belief. Of the Five Pillars to follow, four concern practice--acts, deeds, endeavors--which

---

[70]Nasr in Sharma, p. 475.

[71]Jomier, p. 121.

[72]Ibid., p. 476.

adherents must fulfill. Living correctly takes precedence over

creeds and doctrines.

Islamic ethical practice begins with revelation--the Qur'an.

Secondly, the Hadith--the report of the Prophet's utterances in

his role as guide for the umma--serves to guide the faithful.[73]

The Sharia--Divine law in its totality, maps the road men and

women follow in this life.[74]

Intention (niyya, 'NEE yuh'), is critical to practice. What

is the underlying motive to recite daily prayers? To what aim is

the hajj made? For what purpose is the fast of Ramadan kept? In

reciting the Qur'an, what does the reader intend to learn, heed,

find? Reminders (dhikr, 'TH ikr') are necessary. Thus the

seemingly burdensome emphasis on repeating phrases of the Qur'an

or names of God. Humankind is so "hostile, inattentive, [and]

---

[73]Two parts comprise the Hadith. The isnad is a list of
individuals who recounted the historical sayings transmitted. It
is checked for accuracy as well as reliability of witnesses and
transmitters. The matn are the actual sayings themselves. Two
kinds of Matn are present: the sharif (sayings of the Prophet)
and qudsi ('statements of God remembered in tradition'--what
people remember Muhammad saying that specifically originated with
God). Class notes, Dr. Griffith, 2 Oct. 1995.

[74]The four major schools of the Sharia include: (1) Hanafite
(HA nuh-fit). These followers of Imam Abu Hanifa (d 767) are
found in Turkey, India and China. Broad-minded without being
lax, they appeal to reason--personal judgment and the quest for
the better. (2) Malikite (MA li-kit). Following the tradition
of Imam Malik (d 795), this school appeals to 'common
utility...the idea of the common good'. Arabia, North and West
Africa, Upper Egypt and the Sudan is their location.
(3) Shafiite (sha-FI it). Al Shafii's (d 855) thought influenced
Lower Egypt, Syria, South Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia and East
Africa. Tradition, the consensus of the Muslim community and
reasoning by analogy are characteristics of this school.
(4) Hanbalite. Imam Hanbal (d 855), from Baghdad, followed a
strict interpretation of the Shira. Strong in present day
Arabia, especially Saudi Arabia, Hanbal thought influenced the
revivalist ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Jomier, p. 52.

negligent" that it needs these reminders to practice the faith correctly.[75]

For newly converted populations, these reminders are doubly necessary. Often these "individuals remain superficially Islamicized for several generations or even longer. Since Islam asks only for a simple profession of faith from the new convert, he and even his descendants often continue to think and act in ways which are very dubious."[76]

The faithful follow both personal and collective requirements. Puberty usually becomes the binding age for observance. Suras 25:63-76 and 17 give broad summations of Islamic moral values (show kindness to parents; share material blessings with relatives, the poor, travellers; avoid waste of money; care for orphans; use just weights and measures.)

The following great themes address Islamic ethics and internal motivation of the umma:

Umma (peoplehood) and Dar al-Islam (abode of Islam). Individuals belong to a community. The positive benefits of those who embrace Islam--social justice, solidarity and purpose, political stability--are enjoyed by all in areas guided by Islamic law.

Peace (Arabic root s-l-m). "O mankind!...we made you into nations and tribes that you may know and cooperate with one another" (Sura 49:13). Yet, for all the talk of peace, violence--especially in present day Islamic reform movements--is the

---

[75]Cragg, p. 38. Islamic art and architecture serve in this 'reminder' capacity.

[76]Jomier, p. 37.

reality. Why is this so? What perspective can we take in the face of this seemingly frenzied and brutal disregard for human life?[77]

Exegetes of the Qur'an recognize the tension raised by the issue of violence. Mohammad Arkoun quotes exegetical commentary on the verse of the Sword, "When the holy months are over, kill polytheists wherever you find them; capture them, besiege them, ambush them" (Sura 9:5):

> "The [putting aside] of the order to be at peace with the infidels, to pardon them, to be passively in contact with them, and to endure their insults came before the order to fight them. That makes it superfluous to repeat the abrogation of the order to live at peace with the infidels in every passage of the Qur'an. This order to live in peace with them is given in 114 verses spread among 54 suras. All of those references are [voided] by verses 9:5 and 2:216 (you are prescribed to fight)".[78]

---

[77]See the following <u>New York Times</u> reports:
* 2 Dec. 1995. A representative of some 400 mujahedeen in the American sector of Bosnia says "The American tanks do not frighten us...We came here to die in the service of Islam."
* 21 Dec. 1995, Peshawar, Pakistan. A car bomb explodes, leaving 32 civilians dead and 117 wounded. The 'Muslim militant group Jihad' is suspected.
* 3 Jan. 1996, New Delhi, India. A bomb explodes, attributed to the Jammu-Kashmir Islamic Front, killing six civilians and injuring 31.
* 5 Jan. 1996, Israel. Yahua Ayyah, 'The Engineer' who operated for the Islamic organization Hamas, is killed by a mobile phone explosion device. The deaths of 60 civilians and injuries to some 300 over the past four years are attributed to Ayyah's direct supervision.

[78]Al-Faraja and exegete Muh-ibn Ahmad ibn Jazayy al-Kalbi in Arkoun, p. 97.

"The political consensus achieved among Islamist movements beginning in the 1970s tends to make one forget the theological issues and the historiographical debates that classical thinkers took to be critical...Thousands of mosque sermons, public harangues, articles, conferences, and published works carry and distribute broadly the same emotional charge using the same citations and the same vocabulary, and their effectiveness is all the greater because they are constantly reutilized in ritual fashion. Like a swollen river picking up a wild assortment of things in its path, the rich Islamic tradition of protest in the name of absolute Truth revealed by God is called upon to play the same revolutionary role as in its first manifestation in Mecca and Medina."[79]

Approaches to resolve the issue include: (1) Condemnations of violence in the name of Islam;[80]   (2) Pleas for exegetical objectivity and interpretation, especially considering the Mecca/Medina context of the Qur'anic utterances;[81] (3) Descriptions of the defensive allowance for war, including

---

[79]Ibid., p. 98.

[80]See the following: "Armed conflicts between Muslim countries...are categorically condemned by Islamic law..." Speight, p. 80;   "From the beginning the Prophet Muhammad exhibited maximum tolerance, fellow-feeling and brotherhood, peace towards all, compassion and love, righteousness and freedom of conscience, courtesy towards all; and duty towards parents, kith and kin, and especially towards the downtrodden and exploited." (Paige, p. 41); "Islam does not promote terrorism. Indeed, in its doctrines, Islam is the most tolerant of the world's monotheistic religions...Nor is there any quality inherent to the Shia, or any other sect of Islam, that promotes terrorism." Robin Wright, Sacred Rage, (New York: Touchstone, 1986), p. 20.

[81]According to this perspective, interpretations of the Qur'an need be analyzed from the context of the history and doctrinal struggles of the 7th century. "Only a calm, objective, open brand of history can illuminate declarations" as found in the 'War Verses' of the Qur'an. (Arkoun, p. 70). Kenneth Cragg also writes, the "Qur'an's distinction between a 'religious' call in Mecca and a 'political' regime in Medina...[where the] former can be seen as enduring, apolitical, time-transcending: the latter belonged only to that time and place and has no enduring warrant in Islam." Cragg, p. 71.

observance of laws of war;[82] (4) Justifications of violence as the 'lesser of the evils;'[83] and (5) Discussions of Islamic nonviolence in general.[84]

I agree with theologian Kenneth Cragg, who states that this ambiguity towards the use of violence within some Islamic practices is the critical issue harming progress in Muslim--Christian dialogue.[85] The issue confronts us daily in our newspapers. We must straightforwardly acknowledge this disruption of peace. We must seek to understand the causes of such an approach to solving religious/political matters. We must not generalize by saying all Muslims follow such a path.[86] And, we must continue to pray and work for peace.

Obedience to Divine Law. "Muslims theologize also...[but] that activity takes a definite second place to concern for the

---

[82]Jomier, p. 85 and Speight, p. 57.

[83]The words of Cragg again apply: "Magnanimity must await the final victory when all fitnah (FIT nuh: uprisings within Islam over questions of religious leadership), or seditious hostility, is unambiguously brought to an end. Until then warfare is a lesser evil than fitnah." Ibid., p. 25. Wright also states: "Their (Islamic fanatics) extremism is not for love of violence. Their revolution is against foreign domination and encroachment in every aspect of their lives..." Robin Wright, Sacred Rage, (New York: Touchstone, 1986), p. 251.

[84]Paige, p. 81.

[85]"To the Christian mind, nurtured by Jesus and the Gospels, it will always be a burden and a tragedy that force has been so uncomplicatedly enshrined in the very canons of Islam via the pattern of the Shira." Kenneth Cragg, Muhammad and the Christian: A Question of Response, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1984), p. 51.

[86]Rubin, "Religion and International Affairs" in Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, ed. by D. Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 28.

Sharia and its application to life."[87]   Severe punishments--
flogging, cutting off hands, death penalty/execution--though
applied inconsistently across the world, bear witness to the high
regard Islamic law places upon obedience.[88]

Mercy and Compassion.   "In the name of God the
compassionate, the merciful" (Beginning words of every sura).
The merciful God (Sura 55) enjoins His followers to be merciful
and compassionate.   "We...put compassion in the hearts of his
followers" (Sura 57:26-27).   "Abuse no one, and if a man abuse
thee, and lay open a vice which he knoweth in thee, then do not
disclose one which thou knowest in him" (Hadith as quoted by
Nasr).[89]

Creation.   A constant theme in the Qur'an is creation--God's
power in forming men, women and the created order, and
humankind's role in caring for it.

Family.   The most "important concrete reality in the life of
a Muslim after God, the Prophet, and spiritual/religious
figures...is the family; in the family the most important figures
who preserve organic bonds are women."[90]

We cannot discuss the family without addressing the issue of
women within Islamic society.   Media reports often portray women

---

[87]Speight, p. 82.

[88]Even with their severity, these harsh punishments are
"surrounded with complex conditions that limit the extent to
which they are carried out." Ibid., p. 58.

[89]Nasr in Sharma p. 455.

[90]Ibid., p. 478.

as "victims of the recent Islamic resurgence..."[91] Author

Marston Speight sees the emancipation of women as one of the

major challenges to the Islamic faith.[92] Our perceptions of

women within the Dar al-Islam are ones too often only negative.

"...polygamy, divorce by repudiation, wearing of the veil,

segregation of sexes, imprisonment in household tasks, strict

dependence on the husband, [and] lack of legal rights" seem the

order of the day.[93]

To "hear all sides of the issue" involves our seeking to

understand the subject from within the Muslim world and life

view.[94] The Hadith does describe the equality of all

individuals.[95] There never has "been any legal hindrance to

women practicing a profession or working outside the home."[96]

Islam continues to raise the standard of living for women,

considering the overall history of women in Muslim lands.[97] The

---

[91]Speight, p. 128.

[92]_Ibid_., p. 125.

[93]Arkoun, p. 60.

[94]Speight, p. 126.

[95]"The Prophet said, 'All people are equal, as equal as the teeth of a comb. An Arab is no better than a non-Arab, nor is a white person over a black person, nor is a male superior to the female. The only people who enjoy preference with God are the devout.'" Hadith as quoted in Speight, p. 50.

[96]_Ibid_., p. 52. In addition, see the following by Khalijah Mohd. Salleh, 'Islam, Nonviolence, and Women.' "A muslimat contributes towards the promotion of nonviolence through her positions as individual, wife, mother and member of society..." Paige, p. 113. Contributions to society include education, social work, health, research, even politics (to add sensitivity), depending on the opportunities and talents of the woman. _Ibid_., p. 119.

[97]Arkoun, p. 60 and Speight, p. 52.

complementary roles of men and women do tend to promote societal

stability and harmony.[98]   And the "Islamic alternative...a

positive, enriching choice for women...can [promote] fulfillment,

security, justice and respect" which women deserve.[99]

   Motivation to follow an ethical Muslim path derives from the

following:

   (1) God's will. Since the divine decree (all is decided by

God and in some sense comes from him) governs this world, he

instills right ethical desire within his followers. Reminders of

his presence are still necessary.

   (2) Assurance of paradise. To attain 'heaven', a Muslim's

good works must outweigh his/her bad actions. "Many [Muslim]

traditions believe at death the 'soul will undergo an

interrogation by two angels...who will examine a person's faith

and weigh out the good and the bad in one's life."[100]

   (3) Respect within society. Fear of punishment and esteem

within society--achieved by ethical integrity--undoubtably serve

as internal/external stimuli to right action.

   (4) Genuine obedience. Many Muslims possess an earnest

desire, with right intention (niyya), to follow God by living

according to his decrees.

---

   [98]"The goal is not to make everyone satisfied or
happy...rather, a 'maximum degree of harmony and equilibrium,
achieved by focusing not on the individual but on the group,
society, and the family unit." As quoted by Jane Smith, "Seyyed
Hossein Nasr: Defender of the Sacred and Islamic Traditionalism"
in The Muslims of America, ed. Y.Y. Haddad, (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1991), p. 89. See also Nasr, pp. 461, 478.

   [99]Speight, p. 126.

   [100]HarperCollins, p. 527.

(5) Achieve higher heavenly rank. In contrasting the way of a shirker with that of an enthusiast, the Qur'an states, "Those who fight for the cause of God with their goods and their persons...[achieve] a higher rank than those who stay at home. God has promised all a good reward; but far richer is the recompense of those who fight for Him." (Qur'an 4:95-96).

(6) Desire for 'instant paradise'. Martyrdom in battle (lesser jihad) can result in attainment of paradise.

> "After the period of conquests the jurists stipulated that the Muslim ruler, in order to keep the idea of jihad alive, ought to organize an expedition into enemy territory once a year. If the enemy attacks Muslim territory, jihad became an individual duty for all able-bodied inhabitants of the region under attack. Those killed in jihad are called martyrs...Their sins are forgiven and they go straight to paradise."[101]

Economics, Society and Culture

> "Religion embraces the whole of life...[it possesses an] all encompassing quality...[It is the] very sap of the tree of life, not a part or activity along with art, thought, commerce, social discourse, politics and all..."[102]

Modernity presents an immediate challenge to Islam. The critical question is "how can technology--which has allowed the scientific and industrial rise of the West--be adopted, while preserving the distinctive values of the Muslim heritage?"[103] According to the Qur'an, humankind is given dominion over the earth ("I am placing on the earth one that shall rule as My

---

[101]Mircea Eliade, ed., The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol 8, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 89. See also Qur'an 3:157.

[102]Nasr, p. 438.

[103]Jomier, p. 111.

deputy," 2:30). The earth's resources--technology included--are under this dominion. The sense of trusteeship is demonstrated in a "reverence which hallows...artistry which celebrates and the techniques which harness" the created world entrusted to us.[104]

This 'world dominion' responsibility is expressed in Sharia guidance which 'checks and limits' greed and selfishness. The pillar of zakat (contributions and gifts to charity), prohibitions on interest bearing loans, and inheritance laws serve to bring economic life under the hand of God. Craft guilds see masters, in addition to teaching trades, inculcating moral and spiritual disciplines within their students. Even military operations, influenced by laws of war based upon respect for human life, can demonstrate this world permeating jurisdiction.[105]

Members of the Christian and Jewish faith in the Dar al-Islam receive special protection as 'people of the book.' Though subjected to a tax and experiencing constraints upon their religious practice, these dhimmi (*THIM* mee) are guaranteed a certain peace and protection.[106] This policy, referred to in the

---

[104]Cragg, p. 73.

[105]A summary of the laws of war put forward by the 1st Caliph, Abu Bakr, include: No treachery or deviation from the right path; no mutilation of dead bodies; no killing of children, women or aged men; no harming of trees, or burning them with fire; no slaying of a flock (save for food); and leaving monastics alone. As quoted by Chaiwat Satha-Anad, "The Nonviolent Crescent: Eight Theses on Muslim Nonviolent Actions" in Paige, p. 11.

[106]"The Covenant of Umar made non-Muslim religious communities living under Islamic rule responsible for upholding their own religious duties and laws. The formal conditions also included dress codes, numerous prohibitions, and rules for dealing with Muslims; they forbade non-Muslims from propagating their faith among Muslims. In fact, however, the Covenant of Umar, in its idealized form, has never been fully enforced.

Qur'an over 50 times, established long periods of harmonious

Jewish--Christian--Islamic relations in Spain, Turkey, Egypt and

Persia.[107]

Seyyed Nasr portrays the depth and richness of Muslim

culture, as found within Islamic art and spiritual culture, in

his insightful book, Islamic Art and Spirituality. Art "provides

a shelter from the storm of the modern world; it acts as a spring

of life to rejuvenate body and soul...[It creates] an ambience in

which God is remembered wherever one turns."[108] To be exposed to

Islamic art and culture enables us as soldiers to further

appreciate Muslim societies, acquire an aesthetic sense of their

beauty, heighten awareness of forbidden targets, and satisfy our

own curiosity in what is seen in the Muslim world.

Of the four primary types of art found in Muslim lands,

calligraphy and architecture play the most prominent role.

Calligraphy, the "visual body of divine revelation, embodies the

Word" of God.[109] With rhythmic curves, vertical and horizontal

patterns, this form of art--by its very visualization of the

Nonetheless, its principles have informed Muslim thinking about
non-Muslim communities living in Islamic societies..."
HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 836.

[107]The implementation of Sura 2:256 "There shall be no
compulsion in religion" did much to promote such harmony.

[108]Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Art and Spirituality, (Delhi,
India: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 201, 8.

[109]"Objects in daily use were included in this artistry, thus
reminding the user of the unity as well as the beauty of life
under God." Speight, p. 27.

sacred text--acquires a sacred character.[110]

Architecture, with its openness and use of light, its "lavish color and ornamentation... [which] counters simple desert contexts" tangibly expresses a sense of peace and calm.[111]

Arabesque design, "ornamentation developed from patterns of intertwining leaves and branches, arranged in endless geometric variations that fill...entire surfaces with pattern," displays life, movement, and energy, yet retains order and design.[112] Emblematic of the continuous activity of God, arabesque with its abstract patterns prompts thoughts of God's created order, who "brings up corn and olives, dates and grapes and fruits of every kind. Surely in this there is a sign for thinking men." (Sura 16:10).

Geometric patterns appeal to the intellect in addition to the eye. The "crystalline order, clarity and stability" of God's universe is displayed.[113]

Islamic art--no matter what the form--serves as a reminder of the 'unity as well as the beauty' of life under God. Daily utensils (plates, pitchers, penboxes), inscribed with the script of the Qur'an or names of God, call to attention God's presence even in the mundane matters of our lives. A calligraphic frieze above a city gate, inscription on the interior of a mosque, or

---

[110]Beg, Muhammad Abdul Jabbar, ed., The Fine Arts in Islamic Civilization, (Pantai Valley, Malaysia: University of Malay Press, 1981), p. 89.

[111]HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, p. 497.

[112]Speight, p. 92.

[113]Ibid., p. 27.

framed Sura text are intended to remind people of the Divine
presence in all areas of life.

The apologetic role of Muslim art cannot be overlooked.
"One of the most pertinent aspects of the spiritual message of
Islamic art today is its ability to present the heart of Islam in
a much more direct and intelligible manner than many a
purportedly scholarly exposition."[114] Seyyed Nasr further
expounds:

> "Even a modernized Muslim experiences deep down in his
> heart the sense of peace and joy, even a kind of
> psychological 'assurance,' when sitting on a traditional
> carpet, viewing a piece of calligraphy, or hearing classical
> poetry of his or her language, not to speak of hearing the
> Quranic psalmody or praying within the confines of one of
> the masterpieces of Islamic art."[115]

Sacred architecture suggests rest and peace. The beauty an
artist expresses reveals an inner beauty placed within by the
Creator.[116] Baraka (BAH-ruh-kuh: the 'sacred force' or grace of
the Divine) emanates from some of these artistic works like "the
divine influx which flows in the arteries of the Universe."[117] It
seems to echo an 'other', heavenly world.

---

[114]Nasr, p. 195.

[115]Ibid., p. 196.

[116]"The beautiful work of an author, the beautiful poem of a
poet, the beautiful painting of a painter or the building of an
architect reveal the inner beauty of these men." al-Ghazali in
Beg, p. 10.

[117]Ibid., p. 196. See also HarperCollins, p. 104.

Politics

"How are the domains of spiritual and political authority delineated in Islam? This question approaches one of the most fundamental, most searing, most debated, and, as a result, most embroiled issues in Islamic thought."[118]

Within politics, as with other social/cultural areas of Islamic thought, we cannot compartmentalize into secular/sacred spheres. The world is a spiritual totality. "Religion must pervade the whole..."[119] Even so, the relation between Islam and political life is a complex one.

Though Islam is not a theocracy, yet God "is all powerful over human affairs."[120] The Prophethood and Sharia are the basis for political life.[121] 'Deputyship,' an expression of the dominion humankind demonstrates over this world, is fulfilled through the religious leaders--the ulama.[122]

In practice, this has created divisions among (1) those who sought to create a Muslim state, faithfully carrying out the Sharia within the confines of their specific country, being somewhat oblivious to thought outside their own circle; (2) those seeking reform, who not only worked within their own country but actively encouraged revolution (to varying degrees) amongst others within the Dar al-Islam; (3) those (a small minority)

---

[118]Arkoun, p. 68.

[119]Cragg, p. 41.

[120]Speight, p. 55.

[121]Muhammad was not only a prophet and teacher, but the head of a polity, a community, a ruler and a soldier. Speight, p. 56.

[122]Sura 3:156 instructs: "Take counsel with them in the conduct of affairs; and when you are resolved, put your trust in God."

'Westernized' through education, who brought about creation of modern states (press, universities, hospitals, banks).[123]

At present, the world of Islam experiences many religiopolitical tensions, addressed in the following questions. After experiencing some form of colonial rule for most of the 20th century, how can Muslim dominated countries now oversee their own affairs, implementing some degree of Islamic government?[124] How does an Islamic society react to or integrate "material modernity?"[125] In what ways do aggressively militant religionists fit in with more conciliatory fellow believers?[126] Can authentic religious and cultural integrity be maintained through perceptions of loss--whether in status, dignity, belief or lifestyle?[127] What degree of tolerance is allowed for "misbelievers [when they] rule over true believers?"[128]

Nowhere is this tension felt more than in portrayals of various 'militant, revivalist, fundamentalist' groups. Fundamentalism "is not the only Islamic tradition. There are others, more tolerant, more open, that helped to inspire great achievements of Islamic civilization in the past, and we may hope

---

[123]Jomier, pp. 114-115.

[124]Speight, p. 56.

[125]Arkoun, pp. 117-118 and Nasr p. 502.

[126]Harvey Cox, "World Religions and Conflict Resolution," in ed. Cynthia Sampson, p. 274; Lewis, p. 59, and Nasr, p. 515.

[127]Lewis, p. 59.

[128]Ibid., p. 54.

that these other traditions will in time prevail."[129]

Recent 'fundamentalist' movements--the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Islamic activity in Lebanon and Palestine, power gained in Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia, revivalist movements in Egypt/Algeria--receive almost daily coverage in our newspapers and news media. Often the rhetoric surrounding this coverage borders on the sensational and inflamatory. Such descriptions promote discord and misunderstanding.[130]

Nasr addresses this confusion when he identifies those groups often categorized as Islamic fundamentalist. The first movement could be more accurately labelled 'traditionalist.' Held by a majority of Muslims, it desires to preserve religious and cultural identities, reapply Divine Law, reunite various parts of the Islamic world, and reassert the intellectual and artistic traditions of Islam--all through legal religiopolitical structures.[131]

The second, more uncompromising school, advocates a strict application of the Sharia, in opposition to western and intellectual trends, as well as artistic and mystical traditions of Islam itself. These groups desire "to re-Islamicize society,

---

[129]Lewis, p. 60. Seyyed Nasr offers a healthy perspective on the place of 'fundamentalist' movements in Islam. "Traditional Islam is like the mountain on whose slopes various geological processes, such as weathering and sedimentation created by streams, take place. It is these processes that can be compared to modernism, 'fundamentalism,' and the like and that are usually studied by scholars accustomed to the study of change and oblivious to the vast, permanent mountain on whose slopes these changes are taking place." "Islam" in Sharma, p. 515.

[130]Nasr, p. 516.

[131]Ibid.

[and] apply the Sharia fully, usually by peaceful means."[132]

Lastly, elements of activist, revolutionary sects, often employing terrorist means, define a violent and revolutionary brand of fundamentalism.[133]   Seen by many as a deviant movement,[134] many of its "key ideas are unacceptable to truly orthodox believers."[135]   It politicizes Islam, using the very science and technology it ideologically rejects to "gain access to power by any means possible."[136]

---

[132]_Ibid._, p. 517.

[133]_Ibid_.

[134]Johnston, p. 28.

[135]_Ibid._

[136]Nasr., p. 517. Lewis's description applies to this reactionary fundamentalism: "...something in the religious culture of Islam which inspires, in even the humblest peasant or peddler, a dignity and a courtesy toward others never exceeded and rarely equalled in other civilizations. And yet, in moments of upheaval and disruption, when the deeper passions are stirred, this dignity and courtesy toward others can give way to an explosive mixture of rage and hatred which impels...even the spokesman of a great spiritual and ethical religion--to espouse kidnapping and assassination, and try to find, in the life of their Prophet, approval and indeed precedent for such actions." Lewis, p. 59.

Manners and Customs

"...any particular conduct is tolerated or accepted if it is civilized (ie. considerate of others) and respectable (inoffensive to the individual and community.)"[137]

"According to a saying of the Prophet, kindness is required in every instance of Muslim conduct...[the] main end is to train people to be kind and gentle."[138]

Dr. Marwan Al-Kaysi, member of the Humanities Department, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan, identifies over 1,550 guidelines from the Sharia which apply to manners, morals and customs of Islam.[139] This guidance pertains to such things as social life, dress, funeral arrangements, architecture and marriage. My purpose in not to enumerate each set of instructions. Rather, I identify broad guidelines, basing discussion on the Qur'an, and Islam cultural guidance. Practical help for deploying soldiers and leaders is the aim.

A sense of balance or the 'golden mean' governs human relationships.[140] Deliberation, focusing on the outcome of a matter, is valued. Moderation in speech, and avoidance of "being nervous, highly strung or liable to sudden anger" characterizes those who submit to God.[141]

Following the pattern of commandments 4-10 in the Decalogue,

---

[137]Marwan Ibrahim Al-Kaysi, Morals and Manners in Islam, (New Delhi, India: Qazi Publishers, 1992), p. 52.

[138]Ibid., p. 23.

[139]Ibid., (I quickly counted all the guidance enumerated in Marwan's work!)

[140]"True servants of the Merciful are those who walk humbly on the earth and say: 'Peace!'...who are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but keep the golden mean." The Qur'an, 25:65-66.

[141]Marwan, p. 139. See also p. 51.

Sura 17 outlines principles of conduct. Honesty is essential.[142]
To inhibit adultery, male adherents must not 'give the eye' to
women.[143] Only the shaking of a woman's hand in public is
allowed. The woman initiates the gesture with many Islamic women
using only the fingertips to shake hands. Male/female personnel
deploying to Islamic countries would do well to show great
restraint when demonstrating affection. Soldiers must refrain
from questions concerning a wife's welfare.[144]

Those who show "charity, kindness and peace among men" are
the ones whose counsel is valid.[145] In an imitation of the
'golden rule,' the Hadith enjoins: "A Muslim should treat others
as he would wish them to treat him...Like for others what he
would like for himself."[146] Long-suffering--"enduring wrongs with
patience"--grants one more patience in return.[147]

Humility forbids being harsh, rude or speaking loudly to
others.[148] Invoking the 'Great Name of God' upon a house entered
is a mark of courtesy, piety and respect.[149] Muslims value the

---

[142]"Honesty make a person likeable and helps in building and
strengthening social bonds. It is also an essential attribute of
a good Muslim." Ibid., p. 135.

[143]"If a man should happen to look at a woman, he must turn
his eyes away. An accidental glance is allowed, a second look is
forbidden." Ibid., p. 163.

[144]"Middle East Orientation, Islam," Handout from Forces
Command Chaplain, Chaplain (COL) Charles Clanton, 15 August 1990.

[145]Qur'an 4:114.

[146]Marwan, p. 51.

[147]Qur'an 16:127.

[148]Marwan, p. 33, 34 and Qur'an 17:37/25:65.

[149]Qur'an 24:61.

'clutterfree' life, where memorizing ability denotes education
and simplicity of lifestyle, wealth.[150]

The 'In Sha Allah' (in SHAH ahl-LAH: 'if God wills [it]')
said with great frequency, shows devotion to God, whose absolute
will and power is over His creation.[151] Status often is a
demonstration of God's will--one is born into the right family.
This status needs be protected, especially from public criticism
and insult. Thus, an individual seeks to maintain right 'face'
at all costs. Facts, seen to be subjective entities in
themselves, may be reinterpreted. One's appearance in front of
others is significant.[152]

Long range planning may be difficult. Tampering with the
future may interfere with the 'In Sha Allah'. Thus, commitments
beyond a week or so are not as concrete as we may like.[153]

Miscellaneous guidance includes: "Favoring the right side or
hand in things such as giving, taking, shaking hands, eating,
drinking, walking, etc..."[154] Take care when sitting. Avoid
stretching legs in front of or sitting higher up than others;
sitting with the left hand behind the back; positioning oneself
so the shadows fall upon half of one's body.[155] Do not count upon
Muslim friends to join in celebrations such as Christmas, New

---

[150]Ibid., 16:80.

[151]Ibid., 18:25, 68:28, and see HarperCollins p. 491.

[152]Middle East Orientation, pp. 8,9.

[153]Ibid.

[154]Marwan, p. 52.

[155]Ibid., p. 163.

Year's, Father's Day, birthdays, as these border on imitation of other cultures, a central taboo in Muslim thought.[156]

During joint training experiences, the following guidance may assist:

(1) Competition--where Islamic soldiers 'lose status'--can be harmful. Some go so far as to say "fellowship together--train separately."[157] In all, remember, "It is necessary that a Muslim be gentle when criticizing others for something they might have done."[158]

(2) Dietary restrictions are similar to those used by our Jewish and Seventh Day Adventist personnel.[159]

(3) Communication patterns: Many Muslims stand closer than the usual American arm's length. Expect to be touched. Allowing your host to initiate discussion topics is a good policy. Expect handshakes from all personnel in a party. Sometimes Muslims use 'double meanings' in conversation, which allow for all parties to 'feel good' and not 'lose face.' Such use can show the practitioner to be a person of culture.[160]

(4) Ask permission before taking photographs. Some Muslims forbid bodily representations. Asking permission demonstrates tact and an attitude of respect.[161]

---

[156]Ibid., p. 139.

[157]Middle East Orientation, p. 12.

[158]Ibid., p. 24.

[159]Qur'an 2:172-173, 5:90.

[160]Middle East Orientation, p. 9.

[161]Ibid.

(5) Chaplain (CPT) Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, the Army's first active duty Muslim Imam, gives the following guidance for the use and distribution of the Holy Qur'an. (a) Anyone who touches the Qur'an must have clean hands. (b) Women undergoing their monthly period should refrain from handling the Qur'an. (c) Muslim men and women in need of full bath (ghusl) or ablution (wud'u) should perform these rites prior to handling or reading the Holy text. (d) Keep Qur'an's out of latrines and 'Johnny-on-the-Spots.' (e) Use a cloth or plastic dust cover for the Qur'an when not in use. (f) Keep texts on the highest bookcase shelf. (g) When reading while sitting on the floor, place the text in a book rest or holder. If no holder is available, hold the Qur'an above the lap or waist. (h) Prior to reading the Qur'an, Muslims (and others) should recite the following, 'A-u-thu-billahi-Min-na-Shaitan-nir-rejim," being interpreted, 'I seek refuge in God (Allah) from Satan, the rejected enemy [of mankind.]'[162]

The following guidance applies to burial rites.[163] Bodies are placed in fresh, simple graves. Muslims should only be buried with other Muslims, save on the field of battle. The individual known to read the Qur'an the most is buried first.

Washing occurs an odd number of times, usually three to

---

[162]Adapted from "Proper Handling and Use of the Holy Qur'an," Chaplain (CPT) Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, Chief of Chaplain's Newsletter, March 1996.

[163]I draw on the following sources: Chaplain (Maj) JoAnn Knight, "Background Notes on Sunni and Shia Islam," Notes adapted from Essentials of Muslim Prayer, by Dr. Hosny M. Gaber, Director of the Islamic Center of New York, Washington, D.C.: Dupont Printing Service, United States Army Chaplain Center and School, 16 April 1993; Edwin Calverley, Worship in Islam, (Madras, India: The Christian Literature Society for India, 1925); and Constance Padwick, Muslim Devotions, (London: S.P.C.K. Press, 1961).

five.   Men wash men, women--women.   Fresh cloth, wrapped around
the body three to five times, completes preparations.   Coffins
are used only in specific instances.   Cremation is sanctioned
only in extreme cases (disease producing times).   Late morning or
late afternoons are good times for burial.   The body is placed in
the grave, face towards Mecca, in a posture of prayer.   The
service of prayer, lead by an Imam (or any respected Muslim),
patterns itself as follows:

(1) Intention: "I intend to perform four takbirah ('God is
greater'), the funeral prayer-rite--praise to God Most High,
calling down blessing on the Prophet, and prayer for this dead
man (this I have resolved to do), facing the direction of the
Kaaba."[164]

(2) Standing position: The Imam stands behind the body,
facing the direction of the Kaaba.

(3) Takbirah and Fatiha (universal prayer of praise):   "In
the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate One.   Praise
belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds, the Merciful
Compassionator, Possessor of the Judgment Day!   Thee do we
worship and of Thee do we ask aid!   Guide us into the Straight
Way, the Way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed favor, not of
those against whom there is anger, nor of those going astray!"[165]

(4) Takbirah and Salatu (Blessing on the Prophet).

---

[164]Padwick, p. 35.

[165]Calverley, p. 8.   The ceremony is said quietly with
respect.   Variations of the prayers do occur.

(5) Takbirah and Dua (supplication for deceased):

"O God, forgive him, have mercy on him, preserve him, pardon him, make his descent honorable, enlarge his entrance, wash him in water and snow and hail, cleanse him from sins, as one cleans a white garment of defilement, and change him to an abode better than his present abode, to a family better than this present family, and a mate better than his present mate. Place him in the Garden and rescue him from the punishment of the Grave, and from the punishment of the Fire!"[166]

(6) Takbirah and Dua (supplication for those present): "O Lord, do not prevent us from the reward we deserve, and do not let us be misguided, after him, and have mercy on us and on him."[167]

(7) Salutation: "Peace be upon you and the mercy of God!"

Upon entering the cemetery, the Imam greets those deceased: "The Peace is upon you, O people of these abodes, of the believers and Muslims, and may God have mercy upon those of us who are coming soon, and those who are coming later, for we, if God will, are to meet you!"[168]

Finally, after the body is lowered and the grave is made over the dead individual, the Imam says: "O God, Thy creature has returned to Thee, so have mercy upon him, and show mercy to him! O God, remove the earth from his two sides, and open the gates of heaven to his spirit, and receive him unto Thyself with

---

[166]Ibid., pp. 214-215. Another example is "O Lord, have mercy on the whole of us, our survivors and our dead, our young and our adult, our male and our female, our present and our absent. O Lord, those whom You cause to survive, keep them in Islam, and those whom You cause to die, make them die in the true faith. O Lord, do not prevent us from the reward we deserve, because of our patience on the loss, and do not let us be misguided after him." Knight, p. 17.

[167]Knight, p. 17.

[168]Calverley, p. 216.

a beautiful welcome, and, if he is a well-doer, double for him his good deeds; and, if he is an evil-doer, pass by his evil deeds."[169] Each of the ones standing around may throw three handfuls of dirt upon the deceased.

Martyrs, who die in battle, are interred unwashed in their blood stained garments, without any funerary prayers. Their jewelry is removed prior to burial. If Muslims and non-Muslims are unable to be separated among the battle dead, Muslims can be singled out during special remembrance.

Conclusion

"Islamic societies must be examined in and for themselves...[it is] certainly legitimate for research to identify common factors that generate a single Islamic discourse in very different societies, but...[we] must also come back to the history of each of these societies and its own culture." [170]

The Muslim religion possesses rich variety and diverse cultural expression in different ethnic and linguistic communities around the world. Soldiers--whether in large task forces or small special forces units--continue to deploy to these assorted cultures. Unit ministry teams can competently advise their personnel taking part in such ventures.

Using this guide as a foundation, UMTs can glean additional area/country information from many readily available resources.[171]

---

[169]Ibid.

[170]Arkoun, p. 8.

[171]Resources such as Internet contacts and World Wide Web homepages; Eerdman's Handbook to World Religions, Pierce Boaver, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982); CD ROM Encarta Encyclopedia; World Almanac, 1996, Robert Famighetti ed., (Mahwah, New Jersey: Funk and Wagnalls, 1996); Area Handbook Series (Headquarters, Department of Army, DA Pam 550s); Quarterly Country Reports; and insight gained from unit intelligence

The impact: soldiers who can "use their brains...[and] deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures;"[172] commanders who are informed on religious issues within a mission's area of operation; and chaplains who--in addition to being faithful to ordination vows--are a credible part of the unit and country they serve.

---

personnel.

[172]Alvin and Heidi Toffler, <u>War and Anti-War</u> (Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century), (Boston, Mass: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), p 74.

Definitions

Ayatollah (A-yat-*ool*-LAH):   Leader who has achieved the highest level of leadership in the Shia community.   Extensive academic study is part of the means to this position.

Baraka (BAH-ruh-kuh):   The 'sacred force' or grace of the Divine which emanates from some artistic works or 'holy men' like 'the divine influx which flows in the arteries of the Universe.'

Caliphs (KAY-lif):   Leaders who provided religious and civil leadership to Muslim communities from 632 to the mid-thirteenth century.   In actuality, kings, sultans and the ulama took over caliph powers from the ninth century onward.

Dar al-Islam (dahr ul-is-LAM):   '...the Islamic world...those territories guided by Islamic law.'

Dhikr (TH-ikr'):   Remembrances of God's presence.

Dhimmi (*THIM*-mee):   'People of the book.'   Jewish and Christian personnel who live in the Dar al-Islam.   Though subjected to a tax, and experiencing constraints upon their practice of religion, they are guaranteed a certain peace and protection.

Dua: Supplication prayer portion of a worship service.

Fatiha: Universal prayer of praise.

Fatima (FAH-ti-mah):   Ali's wife, Muhammad's daughter, mother of Hasan and Husayn.   The ancestor of all of Muhammad's descendants, Fatima is venerated by Muslims--especially of the Shia movement.

Fatwa (FAT-wuh):   Formal decisions given on legal, moral or doctrinal questions, presented by mufti, scholars in Islamic law.

Fitnah (FIT-nuh):   Uprisings within Islam over questions of religious leadership, or acts of seditious hostility.

Hadith (hah-DEETH):   Tradition of what Muhammad and his companions said and did.

Hajj: Pilgrimage. If at all possible, a Muslim should make a trip to Mecca, at least once during his lifetime and preferably during the twelfth month of the calendar. Elements of the Hajj include ritual cleansing, circumambulating the Kaaba, canonical prayers and running between two hills (symbolic of Hagar's search for water in the desert.) Participants then 'stand' on Mt. Arafa, toss stones at the devil, sacrifice and enjoy a feast. The Hajj may end with another circumambulation around the Kaaba and final stoning of the devil. Safe return home is a cause for great celebration.

Hanafite (HA-nuh-fit): Division of the Sharia. These followers of Imam Abu Hanifa (d 767) are found in Turkey, India and China. Broad-minded without being lax, they appeal to reason--personal judgment and the quest for the better.

Hanbalite: Division of Sharia. Imam Hanbal (d 855), from Bagdad, followed a strict interpretation of the Sharia. Strong in present day Arabia, especially Saudi Arabia, Hanbal thought influenced the revivalist ibn Abd al-Wahhab.

Ihsan: Beauty. Those who possess Ihsan have a high level of spiritual perfection, a constant awareness of God's presence.

Imam (i-MAHM): Leader of prayers for the faithful. At times, imams also derive authority from their abilities in religious scholarship.

Iman (ee-MAHN): Faith. Iman defines those who possess an intensity of faith--internal conviction, verbal witness and authentic action--which sets them apart.

In Sha Allah (in SHAH ahl-LAH): 'If God wills [it].' Said with great frequency, this phrase shows devotion to God, whose absolute will and power is over His creation.

Islam: "...peace attained by submission to the will of the one God."

Isnad: Actual list of individuals who recounted and transmitted down the historical sayings of the Hadith.

Jihad (ji-HAD): Often stereotyped as "holy war," jihad more accurately portrays an 'exertion or struggle' in achieving the ways of God. The concept describes a vigilance "against all that distracts us from God and exertion to do His will within ourselves as well as preserving and reestablishing the order and harmony that He [wills] for Islamic society and the world about us." In its 'greater' sense, it is the struggle against inward passions, or even against underdevelopment, to counteract propaganda, or offer cultural resistance. In its 'lesser' sense, it describes legal war--both defensive and offensive.

Kaaba (KAH-bah): Of unknown origin, reputedly made by Abraham and Ishmael as a worship shrine in Mecca, it remains an object of religious veneration.

Katib: Describes one who performs preacherly duties.

Malems: In sub-Sahara Africa, term given to mullahs.

Malikite (MA-li-kit): Division of the Sharia. Following the tradition of Imam Malik (d 795), this school appeals to 'common utility...the idea of the common good'. Followers of this school are concentrated in Arabia, North and West Africa, Upper Egypt and the Sudan.

Masjid: Mosque or place of ritual prostration.

Matn: Actual sayings of the Hadith transmitted down.

Muezzin (moo-uh-*TH-th*in): The crier who calls worshippers to prayer.

Muhammad (moo-HAM mad): The founder of Islam who lived @570-632).

Mujahidun (moo-ja-hid-OON): Present day activists who seek to revive Islamic society.

Mullahs: Local Shi'ite 'men of religion'.

Muslim (*MOOS* lim): '...refers to someone who acts in loving obedience to God, exemplified by Abraham's gesture in agreeing to God's request to sacrifice his son.'

Niyya (NEE-yuh): Intention, or underlying motive, is critical to practice of the Islamic faith.

Qudsi: One of two kinds of Matn, qudsi being what people remember the prophet Muhammad saying that specifically originated with God.

Qur'an (koo-RAHN): '...the authoritative text, the Muslim's record of God's revelation to Muhammad.'

Ramadan (RAHM-ah-dahn): Month of thanksgiving and fasting.

Salat: Prayer service. At dawn, midday, mid-afternoon, sunset and at night, this liturgical form of prayer is said by all Muslims.

Salatu: Blessing on the Prophet. Part of the worship service.

Sawm: Fasting. During the month of Ramadan, thanksgiving is expressed, discipline shown, and communal solidarity and reconciliation affirmed through abstaining from food and drink from dawn to sunset.

Shafiite (sha-FI-*it*): Division of the Sharia. Al Shafii's (d 855) thought influenced Lower Egypt, Syria, South Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia and East Africa. Tradition, the consensus of the Muslim community and reasoning by analogy are characteristics of this school.

Shahada: Witnessing. This commitment to obey God and follow the Prophet is summarized in the testimony, "I bear witness that there is no god but God; I bear witness that Muhammad is the Prophet of God."

Sharia (sha-REE-ah): The religious law of Islam.

Sharif: One of two kinds of Matn, sharif being the sayings of the prophet Muhammad.

Shia (SHEE-uh): One of the three main schools of Islam, those who believe Muhammad specified that his cousin and son-in-law Ali would be his successor. The charisma of Muhammad was thus passed on in direct 'blood' lineage through a family dynasty. Religious and political authority rests in Imams alone.

Sufi (SOO-*fee*): One of the three main schools of Islam, for whom mystical/spiritual intensity is important. 'Like the heart of the body of Islam--invisible from the outside but giving nourishment to the whole organism,' Sufi pietism exerts a major influence within Islam. Recalling the austere life of early Mecca and Medina, Sufis often practice ascetic ways. Living in the presence of God, being 'absorbed into God,' is often experienced through intense renderings of scripture, poetry or music. Ecstatic, mystical states often result. A whirling dance became part of a number of fraternities of Sufis, institutionalized by the Mevlevi order. Participants in this rite became known as 'whirling dervishes.'

Sunnah (SOON-nuh): The ethical/religious path of Islam.

Sunni (SOON-nee): One of the three main schools of Islam, those who saw Muhammad's successor as being chosen by the community of those who follow the Sunnah. Authority thus rests in the community, guided by ulama consensus and Islamic law. Leaders do not take on the 'mantle of Muhammad.'

Takbirah: 'God is greater.' Part of the funeral prayer-rite used during worship.

Ulama (oo-la-mah): These learned men are responsible for interpreting divine law and administering Islamic society. Ulama personnel serve as teachers, preachers, market-inspectors, judges, notaries, and in various state positions--as scribes, secretaries, and royal counsels.

Umma (OOM-muh):   '...the totality of people who are Muslims and compose the Islamic world.'

Wali (wa-LEE):   Friends of God or popular saints. Locals often see these holy individuals as possessing spiritual/mystical powers. Their prayers and blessings are sought out. Though condemned by 'orthodox' Islam, pilgrimages to these living saints or visits to the tombs of the dead, still occur.

Zakat (ZA-kat):   Almsgiving. The faithful demonstrate tangible worship by giving 'a kind of loan to God' of from two to ten percent of their income, payable at year's end. Charitable causes receive support in a more spontaneous manner, as the need arises.

Bibliography

"Christian Witness to Islam," (Report of the Commission on
    Theology), <u>Minutes of the General Synod, 1994</u>, (Grand Rapids,
    MI: Reformed Church Press, 1994): 348-359.

"Middle East Orientation, Islam," Handout from Forces Command
    Chaplain, Chaplain (COL) Charles Clanton, 15 August 1990.

Adab Marwan Ibrahim Al-Kaysi, <u>Morals and Manners in Islam, A
    Guide to Islamic Custom, Habit, Qur'an and Sunnah</u>, New Delhi,
    India: Qazi Publishers, 1992.

Arkoun Mohammad, <u>Rethinking Islam</u>, Robert D. Lee ed., Boulder,
    Colorado: Westview Press, 1994.

Bed, Muhammad Abdul Jabbar ed., <u>The Fine Arts in Islamic
    Civilization</u>, Pantai Valley, Malaysia: University of Malay
    Press, 1981.

Boyd, Morris J., "Peace Operations: A Capstone Doctrine,"
    <u>Military Review</u>, May-June 1995.

Braaten, Carl, <u>No Other Gospel</u>, Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress,
    1992.

Calverley, Edwin, <u>Worship in Islam</u> (Translation of Al-Ghazzali's
    Book of the Ihya on the Worship), Madras, India: The Christian
    Literature Society for India, 1925.

Davis, Charles, <u>Religion and the Making of Society</u>, New York:
    Cambridge Press, 1994.

Cragg, Kenneth. <u>Muhammad and the Christian: A Question of
    Response,</u> Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984.

Cragg, Kenneth, <u>Readings in the Qur'an,</u> London: Collins, 1988.

Dawood, N.J. ed., <u>The Koran</u>, New York: Penguin, 1993.

Eliade, Mircea, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, Vol. 8, New
    York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987.

Field Manual 100-5, <u>Operations,</u> Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government
    Printing Office, 1993.

Field Manual 16-1, <u>Religious Support</u>, Washington, D.C.: U.S.
    Government Printing Office, 1995.

Fowden, Garth, <u>Empire to Commonwealth</u>, Princeton, New Jersey:
    Princeton Univ. Press, 1993.

Griffith, Dr. Sydney, "Christians and the Encounter with Islam; Historical Perspectives and the Current Challenge," (HR 230), Lecture Notes, Princeton Theological Seminary, Fall Semester, 1995-1996.

Haddad, Y.Y., ed., The Muslims of America, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Holt, P.M., Ann K.S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, eds., Cambridge History of Islam, Vol I, "Central Islamic Lands," Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970.

Johnston, D. and Cynthia Sampson, eds., Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994.

Jomier, Jacques, How To Understand Islam, New York: Crossroad, 1991.

Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State, Berkeley, Calif: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1993.

Kimball, Charles, Striving Together, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991.

Knight, JoAnn, Chaplain (Major), "Background Notes on Sunni and Shia Islam," (Notes adapted from Essentials of Muslim Prayer, by Dr. Hosny M. Gaber, Director of the Islamic Center of New York, Washington, D.C.: Dupont Printing Service, no date given.), United States Army Chaplain Center and School, 16 April 1993.

Lewis, Bernard, "The Roots of Muslim Rage." The Atlantic Monthly, Sept. 1990: 47-60.

McManners, John, ed., Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity, New York: Oxford, 1990.

Melton, J. Gordon, Project Director, Religious Requirements and Practices (A Handbook for Chaplains), Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, @1991.

Mostyn T., and A. Hourani, eds., Cambridge Encyclopedia of The Middle East and North Africa, Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, Islamic Art and Spirituality, Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, "Islam," Our Religions, ed., Arvind Sharma, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Neeley, Alan, <u>Christian Mission,</u> Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1995.

O'Brien, Joanne, and Martin Palmer, eds., <u>The State of Religion Atlas</u>. New York: Touchstone, 1993.

Padwick, Constance, <u>Muslim Devotions</u>, London: S.P.C.K. Press, 1961.

Paige, Glenn, Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Sarah Gilliatt, eds., <u>Islam and Nonviolence</u>, Honolulu, HI: Center for Global Nonviolence, 1993.

Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Speight, R. Marston, <u>God is One: The Way of Islam</u>, New York: Friendship Press, 1989.

Toeffler, Alvin and Heidi, <u>War and Anti-War</u>, Boston, Mass: Little, Brown and Company, 1993.

Wright, Robin, <u>Sacred Rage</u>, New York: Touchstone, 1986.

Chinese Religions

In this section, I broadly identify foundational concepts common to Chinese religions--makeup and world view, underlying beliefs, art, manners and customs. Then, I treat in more detail aspects of Confucianism and Taoism. For Buddhist influence in China, see the Buddhism portion of this project.

Chinese Religions: Outline

Chinese Religion Chronology

ca. 3500 B.C.   -- Earliest city in China, Liang-ch'eng chen.

ca. 1500   -- Chinese writing developed.

1122 - 221   -- Chou dynasty.

6th century   -- Lao-tzu.

ca. 551 - 479   -- K'ung Fu-tzu (Confucius).

ca. 372 - 289   -- Meng-tzu (Mencius).

ca. 369 - 286   -- Chuang-tzu.

ca. 312 - 230   -- Hsun-tzu.

ca. 250   -- Tao-te ching, attributed to Lao-tzu.

221 - 207   -- Chin dynasty.

206 BC-220 AD   -- Han dynasty.

2d century BC   -- State cult: worship of spirit of Master
                    Confucius.
140 - 87   -- Emperor Wu.

135 - 100   -- Han armies in Central Asia, Korea, and Vietnam.

ca. 112   -- Opening of 'Silk Road' across Central Asia.

99 B.C.   -- First attempt to suppress shamanism by court
                    officials.
65 A.D.   -- Buddhists enter China.

304   -- Huns invade China.

5th - 7th cent   -- Taoist/Buddhist conflict for state
                    recognition.
6th (early)   -- Zoroastrianism introduced into China.

635   -- First Nestorian Christian missionary to China.

640   -- Beginnings of Ch'an Buddhism.

650   -- Maximum extent of Chinese power in Central
                    Asia.
666   -- Creation of imperialism-sponsored
                    Buddhist/Taoist monasteries.

820	--	<u>Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch</u>.
868	--	Earliest surviving Chinese printed book.
960 - 1279	--	Sung dynasty.
11th century	--	Rise of neo-Confucian thought.
1103 - 1104	--	First Ch'an Buddhist monastic codes.
1112 - 1170	--	Wang Che.
1130 - 1200	--	Chu Hsi.
1142 - 1217	--	Wang Ch'u-i.
1215 - 1279	--	Mongol conquest of China.
1260 - 1264	--	Tibetan Buddhist monks begin control of Chinese Buddhist monasteries.
1279 - 1368	--	Yuan dynasty, established by Mongols. Taoism and Buddhism favored by Mongols. Rise of Tantrism. Mongols court largely Buddhist. Major influx of Muslims in western provinces.
1275	--	Marco Polo arrives in China.
1368 - 1644	--	Ming dynasty.
1472 - 1529	--	Wang Yang-ming.
1557	--	Portuguese establish Macao.
1583 - 1610	--	Mattaeo Ricci's mission to China.
1644 - 1912	--	Manchu Ch'ing dynasty.
1645 - 1742	--	'Chinese Rites controversy' concerning compatibility of traditional practices with Roman Catholicism.
1819	--	British establish Singapore.
1839 - 1842	--	Opium War.
1842 - 1911	--	Collapse of Manchu (Ch'ing) empire.
1854 - 1905	--	Missionary Hudson Taylor in China.
1861 - 1894	--	'Self-strengthening' period of rapid industrial expansion.
1883 - 1885	--	Sino-French War.

1894 – 1895	-- Sino-Japanese War.
1895 – 1945	-- Taiwan under Japanese control.
1898	-- 'Hundred Days Reform.'
1899 – 1900	-- United States announces 'Open Door Policy.'
1893 – 1976	-- Mao Tse-tung.
1900 – 1901	-- Boxer Rebellion.
1911	-- Tibetan independence from China.
1911 – 1912	-- Every province declares independence.
1919	-- May Fourth Movement.
1926 – 1928	-- Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition.
1931	-- Japan occupies Manchuria.
1934 – 1935	-- 'Long March.'
1937 – 1945	-- Sino-Japanese War.
1945 – 1949	-- Civil War.
1949 –	-- People's Republic of China.
1951 – 1953	-- Tibet absorbed by China.
1960 – 1962	-- State-sponsored conferences on role of Confucian thought in Marxist society.
1966	-- Cultural Revolution.
1989	-- Tienanmen Square uprising.

Chinese Religions: Makeup and World View

"Traditionally, every Chinese was Confucian in ethics
and public life, Taoist in private life and hygiene, and
Buddhist at time of death, with a healthy dash of
shamanistic folk religion thrown in along the way."[1]

Estimates vary as to the breakdown of Chinese religious

groups today. One appraisal lists the following: Non-religious--

50%; Chinese religions (Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism)--28%;

Animist--2% (especially among the peoples of the south); Muslim--

2.4%; Christian--5%; and Atheist--12 %.[2]

The Chinese world view sees little separation between

religion and culture. Within Chinese languages, there was not a

specific word for 'religion' until modern times.[3] To describe

its religion is to address broad issues of culture. Two major

cosmological themes are present in this cultural world view--the

metaphor of the 'Yin-Yang' and the 'family' nature of religious

belief.

Yin and Yang (yin, yahng), expresses the 'apotropaic' nature

of faith, that is, the dualistic turning or casting away evil

while seeking to attract the good. A creation account, gathered

from various sources, describes this Yin/Yang perspective.

---

[1]Huston Smith, The World's Religions, (San Francisco:
HarperCollins, 1991), p. 189.

[2]Edythe Draper, ed., The Almanac of the Christian World,
(Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990), p. 103.

[3]Lin Xiaogan, "Taoism," in Arvind Sharma, ed., Our
Religions, (San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1993), P. 235.

"In the beginning there was the unity of Yang-Yin (light-darkness, heat-cold, dry-moist). When the subtle went upward, and the gross downward, when heavens formed from the subtle, and earth from the gross, then there was and is now Yang and Yin (active and receptive, male and female). From the harmonious interaction of Yang and Yin come the seasons and all of earth's products. Yang produced fire whose subtlest parts formed the sun; Yin produced water whose subtlest parts formed the moon. The sun's interaction with the moon produced the stars which fill heaven, just as rivers and dust fill earth. When Yang combines with Yin, all creatures are produced. In these two is the All (Tai Chi)."[4]

The following chart demonstrates the qualities of Yin and Yang.

Yin	**Yang**
* Dark side of mountain.	* Light side of mountain.
* Moist from dew, flowers closed, cold.	* Sunlight in morning, warm, dry, "open up, expand, arise."
* Humans: death, dark, ghosts, 'flesh' as rots away.	* Gods, health, powerful things, 'bones' which remain.
* Body/grave.	* Spirit[s].
* Ghost.	* Ancestor.
* Grave.	* Tablet/Shrine.
* Fear.	* Awe.
* Intelligence.	* Honor.

'Family' religion is another form of Chinese religious culture. Rather than 'ancestor worship,' a more correct understanding is 'lineage'--the tracing of the line from living members back many generations to one common ancestor. The line is drawn in a complicated manner. Sons go back through their

---

[4]Kenneth Kramer, <u>The Sacred Art of Dying</u>, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p. 83. "Tai Chi (ti-jee) refers to the great ultimate principle, or ridgepole, supporting the universe." Jonathan Smith, <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 1046. I am indebted to Dr. Stephen Teiser, professor of religion, Princeton University, for the outline of these two forms of the heritage of Chinese religion (Class Lecture, 13 November 1995, "Buddhist World of Thought and Practice").

father, grandfather...daughters trace lineage through their husband's father.

'What happens when a person dies?' draws different Yin and Yang responses. Each tends to go its separate way. Some parts 'sink' (Yin), while other parts tend to 'rise' (Yang). Departed spirits become the objects of hsiao (sheeou, 'filial piety'), a term describing the honor and reverence children show to both living and dead parents. Hsiao also defines the reciprocal way elders are over sons and have a responsibility to produce sons to carry on their lineage.

These two forms of Chinese religious culture influence and are influenced by all other religious expressions, be they folk, Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Muslim or Christian.

Beliefs Common to Chinese Religions

I treat the following aspects of common Chinese cultural/ religious belief: syncretism, ancestor veneration, and emphasis on nature.

To combine different aspects of faith and practice is a common trait of belief on the 'street-level' of Chinese society. By the late nineteenth century, some 80% of the country adhered to folk religion. This religious expression combined ancestor veneration, Confucian ethics, devotion to local deities, Chinese universalism, some Buddhism, and practices related to fortune telling, divination, magic, and sorcery (superstition).[5] Even

---

[5]David Barrett, <u>World Christian Encyclopedia</u>, (New York: Oxford, 1982), p. 231. 'Feng-shui', the system of divination whereby seers select potential sites for graves, homes or temples, is an ancient method of "harmonizing humans and their

today, despite the pressures of the communist state, this amalgam of influences, though not uniform or equal, is found in many Chinese individuals and families.[6]

Reverence for ancestors, "one's primary obligation of a religious sort," involves ritual, manners and the cultivation of social and family graces.[7] "To revere the aged as wise, and the dead as most wise, is to participate in the sacredness of all life through funeral rites, mourning observances and continual sacrifices."[8] Under the assumption that the afterworld is similar to this one--with needs like food, money, housing and clothing, worshipers make offerings at home shrines, either in the form of food or paper likenesses of real objects. The reciprocal benefits of this reverence shown help the ancestor--so that he or she will not fade into oblivion. The descendants in turn receive their ancestor's aid in the form of spiritual influences brought to bear on their worldly well-being.[9]

Nature, the "sacred, essential context of human existence" is seen as the mixture and proportion of the five vital forces: water, fire, wood, metal and earth."[10] With no clear outside

---

works with the terrestrial and celestial powers that might bring good or bad fortune to those who wished to build." (Smith, p. 383). Shamans (SHAH-men; SHAY-men) are popular religious healers and diviners. Ibid., p. 977.

[6]Denise and John Carmody, Ways to the Center, (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993), p. 188.

[7]Carmody, p. 171.

[8]Kramer, p. 88.

[9]Ian Harris, Longman Guide to Living Religions, (Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1994), p. 55.

[10]Carmody, p. 168.

creator god, the "Chinese divinity [is] the arc of the sky, the pulse of the earth, the life force itself."[11]   Nature becomes the source of inspiration not only for life, but for aesthetics also.

Art

The great theme of Chinese painting--nature objects and scenes--was balanced with dark and light, brush strokes and empty space, 'Yin and Yang.'   Nature became the source of artistic inspiration.   Painters sought, with an economy of line and color, to enable viewers to capture the enthusiasm with which they drew. Detailed, 'photographic' reproductions of scenes were not the aim.   The total effect was to be "'poetic' rather than objective, a tug at the heart rather than analysis by the eye."[12]

---

[11]Ibid., p. 201.

[12]Carmody, p. 191.   See also Christian Jochim, Chinese Religions, A Cultural Perspective, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1986), p. 99.   The sometimes confining nature of the Confucian way of life is seen in art as well as other areas.   "There is something wonderful in this restraint of Chinese art, in its deliberate limitation to a few simple motifs of nature.   But it almost goes without saying that this approach to painting also had its dangers.   As time went on, nearly every type of brush stroke with which a stem of bamboo or a rugged rock could be painted was laid down and labelled by tradition...art became more and more like a graceful and elaborate game which has lost much of its interest as so many of its moves are known." E.H. Gombrich, The Story of Art, (London: Phaidon Press, 1973), p. 112.

Manners and Customs

Cultural matters fall into four areas: attitudes, greetings, gestures, and guidance for eating.

(1) General attitudes. The concept of 'face,' the "perception that others within your social group have of you,"[13] while applying to some degree in most cultures, is a distinct characteristic of most Asian societies. It is an avoidance of embarrassment, failure, defeat or contradiction.[14] Due to the emphasis placed upon harmony, tolerance and solidarity, "saving one's face and that of other group members--in particular the superior--is of central importance..."[15] By using tact, focusing on the group rather than individual persons, and avoiding self-centered, monopolized conversations, we display an awareness of this important notion of 'face.'[16]

One of China's longstanding traditions is that of isolation. "Happy to be at the center of the earth, the Chinese empire regarded all outsiders as barbarians and less than fully human." This saying of the 'Middle Kingdom' period of China's history

---

[13]Richard Mead, <u>International Management</u>, (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1994), p. 291.

[14]Grant Skabelund, ed., <u>Culturgrams, Vol II</u>, (Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995), p. 50.

[15]<u>Ibid</u>.

[16]The community focus of cultures where 'face' takes high priority is seen in those where "members are morally and emotionally dependent upon the group, and distinguish group members from outsiders; they achieve identity through commitment to the group; as subordinates, they abstain from openly disagreeing with superiors, or from behavior which might be construed as a challenge to superiors." Mead, p. 291.

still affects, in some way, her view of foreigners.[17]   Personal

qualities of dignity, reserve, patience, persistence and a

sensitivity to and respect for Chinese customs and temperament

are built through mutual respect and admiration.   Behaving in a

noncondescending manner and avoiding loud, boisterous behavior

also enhance cross-cultural relationships.

Respect for customs and temperament applies also to

religious practice.

> "Westerners should never denigrate traditional beliefs
> and practices that are still fundamental to the culture.
> Avoid references and jokes about superstition, spirits,
> seances, voodoo, whatever...[V]illagers, especially where
> agnostic Confucianism dominates, tend to believe in magic,
> demons, evil spirits, and exorcism.   It is often a part of
> political and social life, as in Indonesia where mystic
> tendencies cause government officials to check with their
> gurus and astrologers before making decisions."[18]

Other specific attitudinal measures include:

* Recognize the Chinese are not a 'touching' society.   They
may appear more reticent, retiring, reserved or shy when compared
with North Americans.   Public displays of affection are very
rare.   Avoid being physically demonstrative, especially with
older or more senior people.

* In smaller communities, visitors may be subject to much
curiosity and stares, especially if fair haired.

* Silence, a sign of politeness and contemplation, is a
virtue.   Do not be put off by periods of silence in discussions.
Take care when interrupting others.

* Etiquette dictates declining a gift for up to three times,
even though a person may desire to receive it.

* Ask permission of local people before taking photographs.

---

[17]Philip Harris and Robert Moran, <u>Managing Cultural
Differences</u>, (Houston, Tex: Gulf Publications, 1991), p. 409.

[18]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 414.

* When boarding public buses or trains, expect some shoving or pushing. This is 'all in the course of things' and requires no apology (given or received).

* Refer to the country as 'China' or the 'People's Republic of China.'

* Before deployments, determine the 'ground rules' you and your unit will follow regarding drinking with host nation partners, patronage/acceptance of gifts, and frequenting with women/men.

(2) Greetings.

* Handshakes, but more often a slight bow, are appropriate when meeting someone. A person's formal, full title will often be used in introductions. The Chinese may not smile on being introduced. This emotional reticence is based on a tradition of keeping feelings inside rather than openly showing emotions.

* If giving a gift or business card, use both hands to either give or receive.

* Seating arrangements are important, with the guest at the 'head of the room,' facing the door.

* Don't be surprised by enthusiastic applause. When applauded, it is customary to return by hand clapping.

(3) Gestures.

* Maintain good posture. Avoid slouching, putting feet on desks and chairs, and using feet to point or move things around.

* Personal space for friends is much less than in the West. If engaged in friendly discussion, expect a closer spacial distance. If talking with a stranger or limited acquaintance, expect a greater social distance.

* Use the open hand (not finger) for pointing. Call for someone by palm facing downward with fingers moved in a scratching motion.

* Although governments may try to cut down on the habit, spitting and blowing the nose without use of a handkerchief may be common on public streets. This is considered an act of personal hygiene, not a crude manner.

* To suck air in quickly and audibly between the teeth is a common reaction to something surprising or a difficult request. If such is the case, modify the request made to avoid a potentially embarrassing situation.

(4) Eating.

* Though the custom may be changing, tipping is considered an insult.

* Begin eating after the host picks up his or her chopsticks. Watch your host for tips on use of chopsticks.[19]

* Toothpicks are often available for use during and after the meal. Cover your mouth when poking or picking.

* Refusing food may be considered impolite. Move unwanted items to the side of your dish.[20]

---

[19]Concerning the finer points of chopstick use, the following applies:
    * A host may rub wooden chopsticks together first before eating. This removes any splinters from the utensils. It is impolite for guests to do so as it suggests you have been given a cheap, rough chopstick.
    * Use either a pair of serving chopsticks to take food from a communal dish, or allow your host to serve. Do not take food portions with sticks you have brought to your mouth.
    * Due to cultural connotations, do not stick chopsticks straight up in your cooked rice.
    * Carry on if you drop a chopstick on the floor. Some consider this a positive sign--an invitation to another meal.
    * Use chopsticks for eating, not sucking.
    * When a knife is unavailable, lift morsels of food to your mouth and bite off a piece.
    * When finished, place your sticks parallel across your bowl. Adapted from Roger Axtell, Gestures, (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1991), p. 174.

[20]Most of the points preceded by asterisk are adapted from Axtell, Gestures, pp. 172-175; Axtell, Do's and Taboos Around the World (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1993), p. 85 and Harris, p. 413-414.

Confucianism: Area and Leadership

"Confucianism...is neither an institutionalized religion nor a worship-centered religion. Yet, it has exerted profound influence on East Asian political culture as well as on East Asian spiritual life. Since Confucianism has made such an indelible mark on the government, society, education, and family of East Asia, the Sinic world (including industrial and socialist East Asia--Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, mainland China, North Korea, and Vietnam) has been characterized as 'Confucian.' Whether or not this is adequate, it is beyond dispute that Confucian ethical and spiritual values have served, for well over twenty-five hundred years, as the source of inspiration as well as the court of appeal for human interaction at all levels--between individuals, communities, and nations in the Sinic world."[21]

The term 'Confucian' represents a broad range of ideas and concepts.[22] "The most inclusive defining characteristic of Confucianism is that it embraces all the various East Asian traditions inspired and dedicated to the thought and practice of Confucius, the First Teacher, as he is known throughout the ages."[23] This school of thought, still influential throughout East Asia--despite political, socio-economic and religious upheavals of the past or present--deeply affects the world view of over one-quarter of the world's population.

Is Confucianism a religion? If by religion we mean "a society's response to/search for that which it thinks/feels is

---

[21]Tu Wei-ming, in Sharma, pgs. 146-147.

[22]Some of these meanings include: (1) Kung Fu Tzu's (Confucius's) teachings and policies; (2) Traditional Chinese conformity to values of loyalty to the state, filial piety, ethical/social propriety and self-restraint; (3) Scholars trained in the Confucian classics; (4) Imperial 'state cult' believers; and (5) Neo-Confucians--those who refined and developed Confucian ideas from the eleventh century onwards. Harris, p. 65.

[23]Jonathan Smith, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 281.

ultimately real, truly true, articulated in myth, acted out in ritual, expressed in symbols, engendering (and being engendered by) powerful sentiments (an ethos) and usually embodied in institutions," then certainly it is.[24] Intensity of feeling, seriousness of purpose, possessing a 'healing effect' on a warring society, a way of life expressed around people's ultimate concerns, all encompass the Confucian way of thought and practice.[25] Even in a 'narrower' religious sense, the alignment of "humanity with the transcendental ground of existence," still envelopes this way of thinking.[26]

Leadership of the Confucian school centers around its foremost teacher, K'ung Fu-Tzu (kuhng foo-dzuh, 551-479 B.C.) Though not the founder per se, as the transmitter and true embodiment of the Confucian Way, 'Kung the Master,' the "supreme editor of Chinese culture," is without peer.[27] His integrity of person and perseverance in answer to a 'call' set the example for followers to emulate.[28] His vision, centered on "filial piety, respect for elders and legitimate authority, well-intentioned

---

[24]Adapted from Dr. Charles Ryerson, HR 345, "Hinduism" Course Syllabus, Spring, 1996, Princeton Theological Seminary.

[25]Tu Wei-ming, in the chapter entitled "Confucianism" in Our Religions, goes so far as to say "the distinctive feature of Confucianism is its regard for the everyday human world as profoundly spiritual." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 147.

[26]Huston Smith, p. 183.

[27]Huston Smith, pp. 154-158.

[28]"With coarse food to eat, water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow, I still have joy in the midst of these things. Riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness mean no more to me than the floating clouds." Quote by Confucius (no reference given) in Huston Smith, p. 158.

restraint, respect for classical learning, ritual and protocol,"
became the characteristic world view and practice of the Chinese
people for over 2,000 years.[29]

Mencius (MEN-shee-uhs, 372-289 B.C.) systematized
Confucius's teaching. Believing in the innate goodness of all
people, he popularized the 'five relationships' concept. Hsun-
tzu (shuhn-dyuh, @ 298-238 B.C.) was another early leader in
Confucian philosophy. Thinking all individuals were essentially
evil, he promoted the cultivation of ritual as antidote to
humankind's depravity. Today, Kung te Cheng (b. 1920), a direct
descendant of Confucius and resident of Taiwan, is a leading
spokesperson for Confucian values.[30]

The neo-Confucian movement, developed in response to
Buddhism, was dominant in East Asia from the twelfth to early
twentieth century. It honed and perfected early Confucian
thought. Chu Hsi (joo shee, 1130-1200), with his 'School of
Principle,' saw a pattern running through all material. By
practicing asceticism or moral discipline, followers could
ascertain this inner design. Wang Yang-ming (wahng yahng-ming,
1472-1529), another major neo-Confucianist, established the
'School of Mind.' Innate knowledge, found within the mind, is
the basis on which to view humanity, rather than seeking external
patterns.

A 'Third Wave' Confucian movement seeks to explain the
current economic revival in East Asia in terms of application of

---

[29]Harris, p. 65.

[30]_Ibid_.

Confucian principles to the post-modern world.[31] This

application seeks to 'outmaneuver' competitors, based on

"superior self-knowledge and knowledge of others."[32]

Confucian Belief

"The fundamental concern of the Confucian tradition is
learning to be human."[33]

Tu Wei-ming, Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy at

Harvard University, identifies four dimensions of the human

condition as expressed in Confucian spirituality--the self,

community, nature and heaven.[34] Using these categories as a

guide, we can identify major Confucian beliefs, and expand upon

them in the section on ethics and motivation.

(1) Self-cultivation. A 'body healthy, mind-and-heart

alert, soul pure and spirit brilliant,' are seen as good for

their own sake. This self-transformation draws resources from

cultural tradition, a sympathetic society, the energy of nature

---

[31]"Industrialized East Asia has recently enjoyed the world's
most rapid and sustained economic growth. Such growth rates have
been attained not through the repudiation of the East Asian
Confucian heritage, but through creative transformation of
spiritual resources inherent in the Confucian tradition. Thus,
throughout East Asia, the Confucian vision, deeply rooted in
twenty-five hundred years of history, takes an active role in the
modernizing process...[T]he human factor is central to their
overall development strategy. What they [East Asian] have shown
is that culture matters, that values people cherish or
unconsciously uphold provide guidance for their actions, that the
motivational structure of people is not only relevant but also
crucial to their economic ethics, and that the life-orientation
of a society makes a difference in the economic behavior of its
people." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 216, 219.

[32]Ibid., p. 218.

[33]Ibid., p. 141.

[34]Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 142.

and power of heaven.

(2) Community. The community is necessary for this self-transformation to occur. It broadens and deepens the self, expressing the fundamental integration of all segments of our world.[35]

(3) Nature as home. Confucianism regards the whole world as 'sacred' rather than secular, and cultivates regularity, balance and harmony to enable humankind to flourish.

(4) Heaven. Ideas of God as 'wholly other' are absent in Confucianism. However, heaven "as a source for moral creativity, meaning in life, and ultimate self-transformation" is prominent. As such, heaven aids us in our quest for self-transformation.[36]

Three characteristics identify the 'human rootedness' of Confucian thought.[37] Cheng (juhng) designates the state of absolute quiet and inactivity, being sincere, authentic, real. One can be genuinely human without engaging in a flurry of

---

[35]"The ancients who wished to illuminate 'brilliant virtue' first governed their states. Wishing to govern their states, the first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their personal lives. Wishing to cultivate their personal lives, they first rectified their hearts and minds. Wishing to rectify their hearts and minds, they first authenticated their intentions. Wishing to authenticate their intentions, they first refined their knowledge. The refinement of knowledge lay in the study of things. For only when things are studied is knowledge refined; only when intentions are authentic are hearts and minds rectified; only when hearts and minds are rectified are personal lives cultivated; only when personal lives are cultivated are families regulated; only when families are regulated are states governed; only when states are governed is there peace all under Heaven. Therefore, from the Son of Heaven to the common people, all, without exception, must take self-cultivation as the root." Confucian classic, Great Learning, as quoted by Tu Wei-ming, in Sharma, pp. 143-144.

[36]Ibid., p. 145.

[37]Ibid., p. 169.

activities. Shen (shen) signifies spirituality. Crucial Shen

concerns are the 'heavenly aspect of the soul' and its

development. Based upon the cumulative effect of self-

transformation, Chi (jee), an "originating power, an inward

spring of activity...a critical point at which one's direction

toward good or evil is set" can be identified and used to further

'flourish the soul.'[38] Once rooted, the soul contributes to the

five visions that identify the classic Confucian vision of the

world.[39]

Ethics/Motivation

"It is these ethics which even today we meet all over
East Asia."[40]

"[The] original...intention...is, simply put, to
cultivate ourselves and bring peace and comfort to
others."[41]

The question, 'What is the character of the social life

Confucian education should engender?', addresses the ethical

center of Confucianism. Historian of world religions, Huston

Smith, specifies five terms which designate this 'heart' of the

---

[38]Ibid., pp. 169-170.

[39]The five visions are: (1) ability to respond to the world
in a poetic sense; (2) social sense of ritual as means for verbal
and non-verbal communication within the 'human community;' (3)
historical ability to relate to the collective memory; (4)
politics as responsive and responsible to the whole community;
and (5) the metaphysical interconnectedness of all things. Tu
Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 195.

[40]Hans Steinger, "Religions in China," as quoted in Carmody,
p. 170.

[41]Sharma, p. 214.

Confucian ethical tradition.[42]   Jen (ruhn), chun-tzu (juhn-dyuh),

li (lee) and wen alike are ethical/motivational topics,

influential in the folk/Confucian tradition of the family,

government bureaucracy, and village life especially.   Te (duh)

applies to political life primarily and will be treated later.

(1) 'Jen.'   This basic virtue, as outlined in the Analects,

one of the prime Confucian texts, signifies 'benevolence,'

'humaneness' and 'human-heartedness.'   Cultivating courtesy and

unselfishness promotes the dignity of human life wherever it

appears.   Public displays focus upon diligence, steadfastness,

and a 'largeness of heart' which pursues a mission--the world can

be redeemed by human effort.[43]   This sense of mission, to "make

the world safer and more livable, improve the quality of life,

transform society into a moral community" became not only a

humanistic, but also a profoundly spiritual goal of Confucian

ethics.[44]

(2) 'Chun-tzu' refers to the 'mature person...superior

person...humanity-at-its-best.'   It is the opposite of petty,

mean-spirited individuals.   A chun-tzu person aims to live by the

highest of ethical standards.   He/she seeks to answer, by action

and attitude, the question 'what can I do to accommodate

---

[42]Huston Smith, pp. 172-180.

[43]"[The]...commonness, humility, and reverence with which he
approached life along with his burning conviction that steady
improvement in human life is both a possibility and a necessity
seem to have inspired many..." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 204.
See also Jonathan Smith, p. 567 and Huston Smith, pp. 172-173.

[44]Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 207.

others?'[45]

(3) 'Li' (ritual, mores, ceremony) finds its origin in religious ceremony and rite. Its broader meaning describes the way things are done. Attitude is as important as correct conduct. Manners, an order to behavior and family relations, honoring elders, and the concept of the 'golden mean,' all describe this central concept.

The family, still the "single most important social institution in imparting ways of learning to be human," is the framework for establishing graceful interactions with others.[46] It is the 'glue' for social solidarity. Filial piety--relations encompassing not only children to their parents but generations to each other--is the underpinning for all other interactions, the 'first step to moral excellence.'[47] "If relations at home are right, all others will fall in line."[48] Cultivation of genuine feelings for parents and siblings--rather than estrangement and alienation--is the principle.

This family/communal orientation also plays itself out in salvation schemes. "Personal salvation, unless it involves one's family, society, country, and the whole world, is analogous to the situation of the hermit who has fled the world, one-sided and of limited significance."[49]

---

[45]Jonathan Smith pp. 269-270 and Huston Smith, pp. 173-174.

[46]Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 214.

[47]Ibid., p. 186.

[48]Carmody, p. 173.

[49]Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 207.

We see the depths this devotion can take in death and grieving practices. After a parent dies, the child (son) may retire from public affairs, simplify living arrangements and devote himself to grieving for as long as three years.[50]

'Li' further expresses itself through the five relationships. Father-son, ruler-minister, husband-wife, old-young, and friend-friend bonds and practices are not only critical to a well-ordered society but provide a 'training ground' for the effective development of a humane, flourishing soul. Critics sometimes describe the 'three bonds'--ruler over minister, father over son and husband over wife--as promoting despotic, autocratic, patriarchal, and male-chauvinistic practice. A Confucian response to such a critique sees these bonds not as confining, 'bondage' practices.[51] Rather when seen from a broader perspective, the pattern of social stability, maintenance of the social order, and a 'world at peace' generated overcome the particular discomfiture of such hierarchial relations.[52]

---

[50]Ibid.

[51]"[The p]rimary concern is not the well-being of the individual persons involved in these dyadic relationships, but the particular pattern of social stability that results from these rigidly prescribed rules of conduct." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 193.

[52]The treatment of women is an especially sensitive issue. The ethic seems to undermine romantic love. Patience (gaman) is "a term that comes up whenever marriage is discussed in [Confucian influenced] Japan. It means toughing it out, enduring hardship, and many Japanese regard gaman with pride as a natural trait." Nicholas Kristof, New York Times, 11 Feb. 1996, p. A-3. The woman's status--to obey and serve her parents, husband and husband's parents, and produce a male heir--portrays an ideal of a woman who is retiring, silent and fertile (see Carmody, p. 194). Wives known for their forbearance and patient restraint as

(4) 'Wen' refers to the 'arts of peace'--music, art, poetry, the aesthetic and spiritual aptitudes.[53] The mark of a high gentleman is his knowledge and appreciation of culture, breeding, and grace. "By poetry the mind is aroused; from music the finish is received. The odes stimulate the mind. They induce self-contemplation. They teach the art of sensibility. They help to restrain resentment. They bring home the duty of serving one's parents and one's prince."[54]

In treating death, Confucius "refused to speak about death or after death...Instead, [he] focused his teaching on propitious behavior, on the most mannered action in each situation."[55] In the Scripture on Filiality, the outline of correct funeral procedures begins:

> "When mourning, a filial son weeps without wailing; he performs funeral rites without attention to personal adornment; he speaks without rhetorical flourish; he feels uncomfortable in fine clothing; he feels no joy on hearing music; he does not relish good food--all this is in the nature of grief. After three days he breaks his fast to show men that the dead should not hurt the living and that disfigurement should not lead to the destruction of life--this is the rule of the sages. The period of mourning is not allowed to exceed three years, thus showing people that all things come to an end. The body shrouded, is lowered into the encased coffin...Beating the breast and jumping up and down, the mourners bid the last sad farewell. The body is laid to rest in the burial place selected by divination...this is the sum total of man's fundamental duty, the fulfillment of the mutual relations between the living and the dead, the accomplishment of the filial son's

---

a mark of inner strength became the ideal. The "blatant insensitivity in deprecating gender equality reflect[s] an East Asian mentality with deep Confucian roots." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 214.

[53]Huston Smith, p. 179.

[54]Analects, XVIII:9 as quoted in Huston Smith, p. 179.

[55]Kramer, p. 88.

service of his parents."[56]

Politics

"Simply by being a good son and friendly to his brothers a man can exert an influence upon government."

-- Analects 5:26.[57]

"Self cultivation of each person is the root of social order and that social order is the basis for political stability and universal peace."[58]

"There are those who use their minds and there are those who use their muscles. The former govern; the latter are governed. Those who govern are supported by those who are governed."

-- Mencius III, A:4.[59]

Involvement in life, immersion in the world, and acceptance

of the call to duty characterized the lifestyle of Confucius.[60]

The problem his society faced--warring factions, social anarchy,

people destroying each other--seemed to threaten the foundations

of society itself. Alternatives propounded--a utopian 'love'

ethic or realistic 'life is hard' approach--advocated either

pious proclamation or heavy handed oppression and physical

---

[56]Ibid.

[57]As quoted by Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 185.

[58]Ibid.

[59]As quoted by Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 187.

[60]"Confucius's fascination with music, his sensitivity to nature, and his delight in the simple pleasures of life can all be cited to show that he was not, by temperament, out of tune with the Taoist vision. But for Confucius, it was precisely the nature of the times--the turmoil and disorder--that called for political engagement rather than detachment." Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 201.

might.[61] Confucius, obsessed with tradition, sought out the

transcending values found within tradition.   He identified those

which developed correct attitudes.   Then by education, he hoped

to instill these values within the populace at large.[62]

'Te,' the virtue or power by which the ruler possesses

authority, applies to political practice.   Popular trust--the

example set, character upheld, integrity demonstrated and

authenticity employed--is critical for those who would lead.[63]

The head of state's influence was most profound.   Through example

and precept, he clarified spiritual values and human virtues for

both governed and governors.[64]

The evidence of a highly esteemed state is the one that has

"the finest art, the noblest philosophy, the grandest poetry, and

gives evidence of realizing that 'it is the moral character of a

neighborhood that constitutes its excellence.'"[65]   Victory, over

---

[61]"One of the best known of all Confucian stories is of how
on the lonely side of Mount T'ai, Confucius heard the mourning
wail of a woman.   Asked why she wept, she replied, 'My husband's
father was killed here by a tiger, my husband also, and now my
son has met the same fate.'   'Then why do you dwell in such a
dreadful place?' Confucius asked.   'Because here there is no
oppressive ruler,' the woman replied.   'Never forget, scholars,'
said Confucius to his disciples, 'that an oppressive rule is more
cruel than a tiger.'" As quoted in Huston Smith, pp. 177-178.

[62]"Moral ideas were driven into the people by every means
possible--temples, theaters, toys, proverbs, schools, history and
stories--until they became habits in daily life...Even festivals
and parades were (in this sense) religious in character." Huston
Smith, p. 170.

[63]Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 220.

[64]Carmody, p. 172.

[65]Huston Smith, p. 180.   The six arts: ritual, music,
marksmanship, horsemanship, calligraphy and mathematics establish
and build the morally cultivated life through first disciplining
the body.   See Tu Wei-ming in Sharma, p. 205.

the long haul, eventually goes to the state developing the

highest culture.

Taoism: Area and Leadership

"Taoist religion is alive wherever traditional Chinese
culture survives--in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore,
Indonesia, Thailand...because Taoist tradition is woven into
the very fabric of Chinese culture...No one can hope to
understand Chinese philosophy, religion, government, art or
medicine without a real appreciation of Taoism."[66]

The major concern of Taoism (DOU-iz-uhm) is to "liberate

people from heedless immersion in mundane activities and reorient

them toward the deeper, abiding realities."[67] The religious

tradition rose up, in part, as a counterbalance to the excessive

regimentation, detail and 'correct procedure' found in Confucian

thought.[68] The following major Taoist religious leaders

established and spread its teachings.

Lao Tzu (lou-dzuh), is the purported author of Tao-te ching

('dou-duh jing,' The Book of The Way and Its Power), the first

book of Taoist thought. Called the 'Patriarch of Taoism,' the

'Old Boy, Old Fellow,' and the 'Grand Old Master,' his thought

stressed yielding to the way of nature rather than being bound by

---

[66]Liu Xiaogan, "Taoism," in Sharma, pp. 237, 280.

[67]Jonathan Smith, p. 1053.

[68]The detailed regimen of Confucianism simply became
overwhelming. In the Complete Library of the Four Treasures, the
Manchu Court made effort to account for all the important
Confucian works in the four branches of learning--classics,
history, philosophy, and literature. They came up with 36,000
volumes, comments on 10,230 more titles and employed as many as
15,000 copyists, a project lasting around 20 years. Liu Xiaogan
in Sharma, p. 182.

society and its formal/informal rules.[69]

Chuang-tzu ('jwahng-dyuh,' @369-286 B.C.), whose name is the title for another classic Taoist text, is the second of the major founders of the movement. He advocates spontaneity, freedom and a natural-mystical approach as ways to deal with the chaos found within society. Discarding conventional values, freeing oneself from worldly attachments, and following a mystical, esoteric approach is Chuang Tzu's theme.[70]

Chang Tao-ling ('chahng dou-ling,' @ 142 A.D.), an exorcist and founder of the "Five Pecks of Rice" movement, established a mystical/religious healing school of thought. Today, most Taoist priests consider Chang Tao-ling as their main inspiration.

Wang Che ('wahng-jeh,' 1112-1170) founded the northern Ch'uan-chen (chwahn-jen, 'complete perfection') school. Monasticism, asceticism, and self-cultivation (realizing the 'true nature' in the mind) are the defining characteristics of the movement.[71]

The Taoist priesthood came to recognize more and more deities as the movement grew. Under priest leadership, a Taoist church became established. In contrast to ascetic, educational

---

[69]Whether the historical Lao Tzu actually existed, we do not know. Lao-Tzu, another name for The Book of the Way and Its Power, was distributed in the mid-fourth century B.C. Lao Tzu is said to have appeared in deified form in other times/incarnations. Smith, p. 196.

[70]Jonathan Smith, p. 268.

[71]The early Ch'uan Chen masters lived unique lives. Once, Wag Che slept on ice; another time, he meditated in a hole for a couple of years. Big buildings with huge halls were not the ideal. Rather, an austere, simple life is the pattern to follow. Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 276.

and long term methods of religious awareness, these priests--

soothsayers, psychics, shamans and faith healers--as early as the

second century A.D. offered a more ecstatic, short path to

spiritual realization. Magic as a productive power made "cosmic

life power available to ordinary villagers" through priestly

ministration.[72]

Beliefs

"The two essential ideals of the Taoist religion are individual longevity or immortality, and social harmony and peace."[73]

"The ultimate criterion of belief is goodness and not sectarian prejudice."[74]

Taoist belief draws from indigenous Chinese religion and

incorporates that thought into its schema. "Its polytheistic

system includes worship of both gods and ancestors. In its

popular forms it is represented by a pantheon of gods, spirits,

and ghosts, and it has absorbed almost every ancient practice

known to the Chinese people, such as offering sacrifices to

ancestors, praying for favorable weather, and dispelling evil

spirits."[75] This foundation explains the popularity, on an

individual level, of the religion.[76]

---

[72]Huston Smith, pp. 203-207.

[73]Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 284.

[74]Ibid., p. 274.

[75]Ibid., p. 233.

[76]"Religious Taoism started with traditional Chinese ideas and religious practices...by the second millennium [B.C.] the Chinese had begun to believe in a Heaven that was like a powerful God, and in other gods with lesser powers as well. They also worshiped ghosts and ancestors and believed that the ghosts of

To understand Taoism is to appreciate the alternative world view it offered to Confucianism. Confucianism--classical, socially oriented, geared to public functions of Chinese families and the state, accepting of social duty and responsibility with an influx of rules, laws, ceremonies and traditions--soon became a system of "social and psychological pressure."[77] A diversion was needed. With romantic simplicity, openness and artistic wisdom, Taoism offered a departure. Withdraw from the endless struggle and conflict...prize the individual life. Seek unity with nature. Obtain inner space and peace, freed from the excesses of confining Confucian practicality.[78]

Tao, as the 'path or way' emphasized major themes. First, it centered on the way of transcendence, the ultimate reality-- what was behind all which words could not convey. Secondly, it identified the 'way of the universe,' the pattern, rhythm, driving power, the ordering principle behind all life. In this sense, Tao (and the Taoist religion), became the integrating

---

their ancestors could communicate with them through religious ceremonies and influence their happiness. At the same time, the art of divination by oracle bone developed. In the West Chou dynasty...in the early first millennium [B.C.], there were officers in charge of sacrificial offerings to three systems of gods: heaven gods, such as the sun, moon, wind, stars, thunder, and rain; earth gods, such as the land, grain, rivers, and mountains; and human ghosts, such as ancestors and sages. All of these gods and ghosts were sources of Taoist polytheism." Ibid., p. 254.

[77]Ibid., p. 280.

[78]Carmody, pp. 202, 231. As an alternative to the excesses and strains of our society, Taoism may offer a similar diversion. "...[The] rapid progress of civilization and technology has brought humankind such innovations as computers, highways, jet liners, spaceships, and nuclear power, but also problems of ecological crisis and spiritual perplexity."

principle behind all of life. Lastly, Tao meant the 'way of human life,' that is, the way life should be.[79] All of these undertones surface in Taoist religious expression.

Quest for long life became a Taoist goal. Stemming from the focus on nature, with its rhythm of constant renewal, and trying to emulate that rhythm, Taoism focused on techniques to prolong life. In the <u>Classic of Great Peace</u>, an "expression of the common values of the Chinese people," long life became a most important goal between heaven and earth.[80] Taoist thought sought to 'conserve life' in many ways. In keeping harmony within the spirit and material forces within the body, a life inducing 'heart, mind and will' ensued. Meditation--focusing one's spirit and so avoiding dissipation--became a valued technique. Consolidation of 'vital powers so as to resist death' became the ideal--not nirvana or 'release.' Moderation in the desires and emotions preserved body and soul.[81] Gods became identified with specific body parts--heart, liver, spleen--and homage to these gods became a focus of devotional exercises.[82]

Two main branches of Taoism became prominent, those of philosophy and religion. Philosophy sought transcendence--a

---

[79]Huston Smith, p. 196.

[80]Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 256.

[81]People die early not because of fate but because their way of living hurts their spirits or bodies. To preserve the spirit/body requires moderation in desires and emotion. The seven emotions (anger, anxiety, thinking, sorrow, fear, aversion, astonishment) and six desires (for life, death, of eyes, ears, nose, mouth and nose) are all harmful to the spirit and are to be controlled. (Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 182).

[82]Carmody, p. 180.

going beyond the limits of this world, a breaking of the 'bonds of the universe.' Religion concentrated on long life in the 'here-and-now.' Philosophy developed a strong 'anti-traditional, transcend common values' stance. Religion respected the emperor and the broad Confucianist movement. Philosophy became increasingly individualistic and critical. The 'blank mind' became an ideal. Religion concentrated on the practical and social tenets of faith.[83] Life lived long and with a minimum amount of 'friction' was the goal.

Worship

General characteristics of Taoist rites include: altar building, offering displays, incense burning, using amulets and talismans,[84] expounding commandments, scripture chanting, and hymn singing. Candle lanterns, music and sacred dance accompanied the services.[85]

These rites were complicated. Some lasted a couple of days, a week or even extended to sixty day periods. Many names described various ritual observances. Their underlying purpose was to reach the gods, ensuring happiness and freedom from

---

[83]Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 239.

[84]Talismans are objects, supposedly possessing occult powers, worn as charms or amulets. Amulets are charms used to ward off bad luck or evil. Charms are trinkets or objects worn, often on the wrist, as things of style or beauty. Laurence Urdang, ed., The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, (New York: Random House, 1968).

[85]Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, p. 271.

disasters.[86]

Two Taoist religious sects developed and are popular today. The 'Orthodox Unity Movement'--finding greatest expression in Taiwan--sees a priesthood who eat a regular diet, live in houses, do not cover their heads and are known commonly as 'Taoist priests living at home.' 'Complete Purity Sect' priests and nuns follow the Buddhist pattern. They live in monasteries and convents, wear robes and eat a restricted diet.

Ethics/Motivation

> "He who stands on tiptoe doesn't stand firm. He who rushes ahead doesn't go far. He who tries to shine dims his own light."[87]

> "Nothing in the world is as soft and yielding as water. Yet for dissolving the hard and inflexible, nothing can surpass it. The soft overcomes the hard; the gentle overcomes the rigid. Everyone knows this is true, but few can put it into practice."[88]

'Wu-wei' (woo-way) describes the Taoist ethical ideal. By "avoiding purposive action intended to effect desired ends...[and] interfering with the natural course of things ('the Tao'), [individuals] should follow [their] own natural course and allow all other things to do likewise."[89] Wu-wei restricts human action. When tempted to engage in a frenzied pace, become

---

[86]Secondary purposes include (1) for the spiritually adept, rituals bring mystical union and immortality; (2) for villagers, they bring blessing and renewal; (3) for departed souls, they bring salvation and release from hell's punishment. Liu Xiaogan in Sharma, pp. 282-283.

[87]Tao Te Ching, Ch. 24, as quoted in Huston Smith, p. 211.

[88]Ibid., chapter 78.

[89]Jonathan Smith, p. 1141.

involved in a flurry of activities, or run from one excited project to the next, wu-wei encouraged a 'fasting of the spirit.' "Lay aside distractions and let the simple, deep powers of spiritual consciousness issue forth. Join nature's rhythms...prefer obscure peace to troubled power, leisurely contemplation to hectic productivity."[90]

The Taoist ideal, the 'good life,' is a community living a natural, harmonious, simple life without the pressures of war and competition. 'Being' not 'having' becomes the enlightened style of life. Contented individuals "simple, whole, alert...[with] few modern advances, and less technology" possess the necessary leisure to engage in "spontaneous interaction."[91] This sense of spontaneity ('tzu-jan' [dzuh-rahm], 'spontaneity, nature, naturalness') comes from within, in concert with the ebb and flow of nature itself.

Other personal traits within the tradition include reverent humility, and an avoidance of strident, aggressive behavior with others and nature. Selflessness, cleanliness and emotional calm characterize the fulfilled individual. Nature is to be 'befriended' rather than conquered.[92] In remaining attuned with nature, Taoist thought served as an early precursor to the

---

[90]Carmody, p. 178.

[91]Ibid., p. 179.

[92]"When the British scaled earth's highest peak, the exploit was widely hailed as 'the conquest of Everest.' D.T. Suzuki remarked: 'We orientals would have spoken of befriending Everest.' The Japanese team that scaled Anapurna, the second highest peak, climbed to within 50 feet of the summit and deliberately stopped, provoking a Western mountaineer to exclaim in disbelief, 'That's class!' Taoism seeks attunement with nature, not dominance." Huston Smith, pp. 212-213.

ecological/environmental movement.[93]

Concerning death, "for Lao Tzu...the [person] of Tao does not waste energy being anxious about dying."[94] Excessive desire for life, contrary to encouraging longevity, actually can lead to an earlier death in that it conflicts with nature's flow.[95] A sense of naturalness at the time of death is desired.

Politics

"A leader is best [w]hen people barely know that he exists. Of a good leader, who talks little, [w]hen his work is done, his aim fulfilled, [t]hey will say, 'We did this ourselves.'"[96]

"The supreme good is like water, which nourishes all things without trying to. It is content with the low places that people disdain. Thus it is like the Tao."[97]

Society should emulate nature. Politically, this tradition, as identified in Tao Te Ching, took three metaphors and applied them to the nation. (1) In patterning after nature's 'valleys,' Taoist rulers would look for the underlying principles, and the

---

[93]"Those who would take over the earth and shape it to their will never, I notice, succeed. The earth is like a vessel so sacred that at the mere approach of the profane it is marred and when they reach out their fingers it is gone." Tao Te Ching, ch. 29 as quoted in Huston Smith, p. 212.

[94]Kramer, p. 85.

[95]"Human life commences in birth and terminates in death. The disciples of life are about one-third, while the disciples of death are about one-third. [Those who originally could have lived to an old age but who of their own accord] walk the path of death also number about one-third. Why is this? Because their desire for life is too excessive." Lao Tzu as quoted in Kramer, no specific reference given, p. 86.

[96]Tao Te Ching, ch. 17, as quoted in Huston Smith, p. 210.

[97]Ibid., ch. 8.

lowly individuals in their communities, rather than those who were prominent and impressive. (2) Traits identified with the Taoist ideal 'female'--passivity, sense of yielding and adaptability--became government ideals. "Influence not by assault but by indirection, nuance and suggestion" became the model.[98] (3) The 'uncarved block,' with its natural simplicity and capacity for infinite potential, pertained to society. Rather than 'fixing' society with confining rules, limiting regulations and excessive law, allow society to realize its full capacity. 'Te' (duh, 'power') was to be conserved, and used efficiently, rather than reckless inordinate abandon.

   This Taoist ideal was not "mindless docility or pacifism."[99] It upgraded the position of women. It curtailed murder of female infants. It tolerated a regretful use of force in order to stop a greater evil. Yet, underlying all was a sublime sense of the supernatural, an emphasis upon culture, an allowance for all to pursue their 'inner space' and 'natural attitude to life.'

Art

   Differing from Confucian formalism, pomp and extravagance, Taoist art works idealized the primitive. Painters would go to nature, lose themselves in it, and even seek to become one with it. So great was their identification with their subject matter, they even sought to identify with the bamboo with which they painted. "Vastness and solitude--pliability, endurance and

---

[98]Carmody, p. 179.

[99]Ibid.

continuous movement" characterized Taoist influence.   Spontaneity
and flow, in contrast to rigid technique and stilted custom,
marked the school.[100]

---

[100]Andrew Solomon, "Don't Mess With Our Cultural Patrimony!,"
New York Times Magazine, 17 March 1996, p. 35.

Terms

Chang Tao-ling ('chahng dou-ling,' @ 142 A.D.): An exorcist
and founder of the "Five Pecks of Rice" movement,
established a mystical/religious healing school of thought.
Today, most Taoist priests consider Chang Tao-ling as their
main inspiration.

Cheng (juhng): Designates the state of absolute quiet and
inactivity, being sincere, authentic, real. One can be
genuinely human without engaging in a flurry of activities.

Chi (jee): An "originating power, an inward spring of
activity...a critical point at which one's direction toward
good or evil is set." Can be identified and used to further
'flourish the soul.'

Chuang Tzu ('jwahng-dyuh,' @369-286 B.C.): His name is the
title for another classic Taoist text. The second of the
major founders of the movement, he expounds spontaneity,
freedom and a natural-mystical approach as ways to deal with
the chaos found within society. Discarding conventional
values, freeing oneself from worldly attachments, and
following a mystical, esoteric approach is Chuang Tzu's
theme.

'Chun-tzu:' Refers to the 'mature person...superior
person...humanity-at-its-best.' It is the opposite of
petty, mean-spirited individuals. A chun-tzu person aims to
live by the highest of ethical standards. He/she seeks to
answer, by action and attitude, the question 'what can I do
to accommodate others?'

Chu Hsi (joo shee, 1130-1200): With his 'School of Principle,'
he saw a pattern running through all material. In
practicing asceticism or moral discipline, followers could
ascertain this inner design.

'Face:' The "perception that others within your social group
have of you," while applying to some degree in most
cultures, is a distinct characteristic of most Asian
societies. It seeks an avoidance of embarrassment, failure,
defeat or contradiction.

Feng-shui: The system of divination whereby seers select
potential sites for graves, homes or temples, is an ancient
method of "harmonizing humans and their works with the
terrestrial and celestial powers that might bring good or
bad fortune to those who wished to build." (Smith, p. 383).

Hsiao (sheeou, 'filial piety'): A term describing the honor and reverence children show to both living and dead parents. Hsiao also defines the reciprocal way elders are over sons and have a responsibility to produce sons to carry on their lineage.

Hsun-tzu (shuhn-dyuh, @ 298-238 B.C.): Another early leader in Confucian philosophy. Thinking all individuals were essentially evil, he promoted the cultivation of ritual as antidote to humankind's depravity.

'Jen' (ruhn): This basic virtue, as outlined in the Analects, one of the prime Confucian texts, signifies 'benevolence,' 'humaneness' and 'human-heartedness.' Cultivating courtesy and unselfishness promotes the dignity of human life wherever it appears. Public displays focus upon diligence, steadfastness, and a 'largeness of heart' which pursues a mission--the world can be redeemed by human effort.

K'ung Fu-Tzu (kuhng foo-dzuh, 551-479 BC): Though not the founder per se of Confucianism, as the transmitter and true embodiment of the Confucian Way, 'Kung the Master,' the "supreme editor of Chinese culture," is without peer.

Kung te Cheng (b. 1920): A direct descendant of Confucius and resident of Taiwan, is a leading spokesperson for Confucian values.

Lao Tzu (lou-dzuh): The purported author of Tao-te ching ('dou-duh jing,' The Book of The Way and Its Power), the first book of Taoist thought. Called the 'Patriarch of Taoism,' the 'Old Boy, Old Fellow,' and the 'Grand Old Master,' his thought stressed yielding to the way of nature rather than being bound by society and its formal/informal rules.

'Li' (ritual, mores, ceremony): Finds its origin in religious ceremony and rite. Its broader meaning describes the way things are done. Attitude is as important as correct conduct. Manners, an order to behavior and family relations, honoring elders, and the concept of the 'golden mean,' all describe this central concept.

Mencius (MEN-shee-uhs, 372-289 B.C.): Systematized Confucius's teaching. Believing in the innate goodness of all people, he popularized the 'five relationships' concept.

Neo-Confucian movement: Developed in response to Buddhism, was dominant in East Asia from the twelfth to early twentieth century. It honed and perfected early Confucian thought.

Shamans (SHAH-men; SHAY-men): Popular religious healers and diviners.

Shen (shen): Signifies spirituality. Crucial Shen concerns are the 'heavenly aspect of the soul' and its development.

Tai Chi (ti-jee): Refers to the great ultimate principle, or ridgepole, supporting the universe.

'Te:' The virtue or power by which the ruler possesses authority, applies to political practice. Popular trust-- the example set, character upheld, integrity demonstrated and authenticity employed--is critical for those who would lead.

'Third Wave:' Confucian movement seeks to explain the current economic revival in East Asia in terms of application of Confucian principles to the post-modern world. This application seeks to 'outmaneuver' competitors, based on "superior self-knowledge and knowledge of others."

Tzu-jan (dzuh-rahm): Spontaneity, nature, naturalness, comes from within, in concert with the ebb and flow of nature itself.

Wang Che ('wahng-jeh,' 1112-1170): Founded the northern Ch'uan- chen (chwahn-jen, 'complete perfection') school. Monasticism, asceticism, and self-cultivation (realizing the 'true nature' in the mind) are the defining characteristics of the movement.

Wang Yang-ming (wahng yahng-ming, 1472-1529): Another major neo- Confucianist, established the 'School of Mind.' Innate knowledge, found within the mind, is the basis to view humanity, rather than seeking external patterns.

'Wen:' Refers to the 'arts of peace'--music, art, poetry, the aesthetic and spiritual aptitudes.

'Wu-wei' (woo-way): Describes the Taoist ethical ideal. By "avoiding purposive action intended to effect desired ends...[and] interfering with the natural course of things ('the Tao'), [individuals] should follow [their] own natural course and allow all other things to do likewise.

Yin and Yang (yin, yahng): Express the 'apotropaic' nature of faith, that is, the dualistic turning or casting away evil while seeking to attract the good.

Bibliography

Axtell, Roger, <u>Do's and Taboos Around the World</u>, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1993.

Axtell, Roger, <u>Gestures</u>, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1993.

Barrett, David, <u>World Christian Encyclopedia</u>, New York: Oxford, 1982.

Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Ways to the Center</u>, Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993.

Draper, Edythe, ed., <u>The Almanac of the Christian World</u>, Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990.

Gombrich, E.H., <u>The Story of Art</u>, London: Phaidon Press, 1973.

Harris, Ian, <u>Longman Guide to Living Religions</u>, Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1994.

Harris, Philip and Robert Moran, <u>Managing Cultural Differences</u>, Houston, Tex: Gulf Publications, 1991.

Jochim, Christian, <u>Chinese Religions, A Cultural Perspective</u>, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1986.

Kramer, Kenneth, <u>The Sacred Art of Dying</u>, New York: Paulist Press, 1988.

Kristof, Nicholas, <u>New York Times</u>, 11 Feb., 1996.

Mead, Richard, <u>International Management</u>, Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1994.

Skabelund, Grant, ed., <u>Culturgrams, Vol. II</u>, Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995.

Smith, Huston, <u>The World's Religions</u>, San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991.

Smith, Jonathan, <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>, San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995.

Solomon, Andrew, "Don't Mess With Our Cultural Patrimony!" <u>New York Times Magazine</u>, 17 March 1996, p. 35.

Wei-ming, Tu, "Confucianism," in Sharma, Arvind, ed., <u>Our Religions</u>, San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995.

Xiaogan, Lin, "Taoism," in Arvind Sharma, ed., <u>Our Religions</u>, San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1993.

African Traditional Religions: Outline

Selected African Chronology

5000 B.C.	-- Agriculture and domesticated cattle in the Nile Delta.
4000 B.C.	-- Intense hunting, gathering and fishing in North Africa.
3000 B.C.	-- Farming in Central Africa.
1500s-1200s BC	-- 'Golden Age' of Egypt.
900 B.C.	-- Nubian Kingdom of Kush.
500 B.C.	-- Iron making in sub-Sahara region.
30 B.C.	-- Roman Empire controlled North Africa.
300 A.D.	-- Ethiopia (Askum) becomes Christianized.
639 - 710 A.D.	-- Arab Muslims conquer North Africa.
900-1500 A.D.	-- Emergence of African States.
1400s	-- Portuguese begin exploration of West African Coast.
	-- Over 900 Africans brought to Lisbon as slaves by 1448.
1506 - 1543	-- Nzinga Mbemba (Dom Affonso) of Kongo converts to Christianity.
1526 - 1870	-- Ten million slaves shipped from Africa.
1652	-- Dutch found Capetown.
1822	-- Liberia founded by American Colonization Society.
1840 - 1873	-- David Livingstone to Africa

1880s - 1913   -- Colonization by European powers.

1861   -- First of eight trips to Africa taken by
                   Edward Blyden.

1870   -- Henry McNeal Turner promotes 'back to Africa'
                   movement.

1876 - 1915   -- Mary Slessor to Africa.

1880s - 1915   -- African American leaders to Africa (Samuel
                   Miller, William Henry Shepperd, Maria
                   Fearing).

1920s   -- United Negro Improvement Association of
                   Marcus Garvey.

1950s - 1960s   -- Independence by most African countries.

1965 - 1990   -- Growth of indigenous African mission agencies.

1979, 1990   -- Zimbabwe and Namibia Independence.

April, 1994   -- First all inclusive elections, South Africa.
                   Nelson Mandela elected President.

African Traditional Religions

"Everyone is aware that rapid changes are taking place
in Africa, so that traditional ideas are being abandoned,
modified or colored by the changing situation. At the same
time it would be wrong to imagine that everything
traditional has been changed or forgotten so much that no
traces of it are to be found...Traditional concepts still
form the essential background of many African peoples..."[1]

"Despite the variety of names and forms, African
religions do genuinely exhibit an astonishing uniformity of
emphasis which make of them merely local variations on a few
axiomatic themes, to a much greater degree certainly than we
find in Christianity or others of the world religions such
as Hinduism."[2]

African religions cover a diverse people, composed of over

eight hundred ethnic groups and an equal number of languages.

Still, a spiritual unity pervades.[3] Though Christianity and

Islam in Africa are so old that they could be categorized as

'traditional,' I limit discussion to non-Christian/Muslim

religious expressions centered primarily south of the Sahara. Of

the 510 million Africans living south of the Sahara, over 200

million follow this traditional concept and practice of religion.

Most, if not all, of Black Africa--Muslim, Christian and

traditional--is deeply affected by this world and life view.

----

[1]Mbiti, John, <u>African Religions and Philosophy</u>, (Portsmouth,
New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990), p. x.

[2]Zuesse, Evan M., "Perseverance and Transmutation in African
Traditional Religions," in Jacob Olupona, ed., <u>African
Traditional Religions</u>, (New York: Paragon House, 1991), p. 171.

[3]See Robert Zeleny, ed., <u>The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol I</u>,
(Chicago: World Book, Inc., 1989), pp. 104-105; Denise and John
Carmody, <u>Prayer in World Religions</u>, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis,
1990), p. 125; Charles Joyner, "Believer I Know," in Paul
Johnson, ed., <u>African American Christianity</u>, (Berkeley:
University of California Press, 1994), p. 37 and Noel King,
<u>African Cosmos</u>, (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1986), p.
2.

Clergy/Leadership

"Life is participation in God, but it is always mediated by one standing above the recipient in the hierarchy of being. This hierarchy belongs both to the invisible and to the visible world. In the invisible world, the highest place is occupied by God, the source of life. Then come the founding fathers of clans, who participate most fully in the life of God. Then come the tribal heroes, deceased elders, other dead members of the family, and various invisible beings, including earthly powers, although these belong partly also to the visible world...They include the king, and the queen-mother, as well as those who wield or represent royal power; the chiefs of clans and the oldest members of families; heads of households; family members."[4]

"The king is not a man...He is man before his appointment to the throne; But once appointed, he is separated from the ordinary nobility and he acquires a place apart."[5]

Spiritual leaders and intermediaries within the 'visible' world, as identified by Dr. John Mbiti, include the following: Medicine-men and women, mediums and diviners, rainmakers, kings-queens-rulers, and priests.[6] As part of the hierarchy stemming from the Supreme God, these religious specialists command "unquestioned loyalty and obedience" as a 'taken-for-granted' matter.[7]

Medicine-men and women are the great source of help for sickness, disease and misfortune. These indivisuals, respected both for their person and profession, aid in the prevention and

---

[4]Benzet Bujo, <u>African Theology in Its Social Context</u>, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1992), p. 20 as quoted in Paris, <u>The Spirituality of African Peoples</u>, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), chapter 4, footnote 9, p. 176.

[5]A. Kagame, <u>La poesie dynastique au Rwanda</u>, (Brussels, 1951), p. 53, as quoted in Vincent Mulago, "Traditional African Religion and Christianity," in Olupona, p. 122.

[6]Mbiti, pp. 162-181.

[7]Paris, p. 85.

cure of disease. They purge areas of witches, detect sorcery and remove curses. They symbolize the "hopes of the society" and serve as "friends, pastors, psychiatrists and doctors of traditional African villages and communities."[8]

Mediums and diviners, primarily women practitioners, are 'medicine-type-men' individuals who deal with the living-dead and spirits. Mediums "receive and interpret direct communication with deities, souls of the dead, and other nonhuman powers."[9] As such, they "contemporarize the past."[10]

Diviners use a variety of methods to 'unveil the mysteries of life.'[11] Sometimes through possession, diviners are filled by spirits to read omens and interpret the moves of sacred animals.[12] More often they discern through wisdom based on uncommon sense, intuitive insight, hypnotism, secret knowledge and interpretation of stones, gourds and marks.[13]

---

[8]Mbiti, p. 166.

[9]Jonathan Smith, ed., The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 696.

[10]Mbiti, p. 167.

[11]Prayers, sacrifices, adoration, thanksgiving, bargaining sacrifice, propitiation in suffering, initiation rites, medicines and oracles are a few of their methods. See Mbiti, p. 167.

[12]Concerning spirit possession, Dr. Raboteau writes: "...devotees are possessed by a god...whose personality displaces that of the human medium. The advice, commands, gestures, and identity of the god are transmitted through the possessed...the possessed devotee...makes the god present to the cult community." Raboteau, Slave Religion, (New York: Oxford, 1980), p. 63.

[13]Carmody, p. 58 and Mbiti, p. 167. Sorcery, "the use of supernatural or magical power to bring about a cause-and-effect relationship on objects and people," is practiced with evil intent. Smith, ed., p. 1012. Sorcery "stands for anti-social employment of mystical power...sorcerers [being the] most feared and hated members of their communities." Mbiti, p. 195.

Rainmakers, some of the most important of traditional leaders, are employed to both make and stop rain. Rainmaking is a community affair, with sacrifices, offerings and prayers being made either "directly to God or through the intermediary of the living-dead and spiritual agents." Rainmakers "play the role of intermediaries...[being] the focal point of communal need and request for rain."[14]

Although there is a general 'weakening of the office of traditional rulers (kings, queens, monarchs),' where present these leaders nonetheless exert a powerful influence. Where absent by title, other elected/clergy positions acquire a similar status.[15] God's power is close to these leaders, who, being more than patriarchal figures, embody a regal--kingly and queenly-- status.[16]

Priests--the religious servants associated most often with West African temples--look after the 'soul' of the community and install kings/queens and chiefs. They personify the divinity within the midst of the community. Since there is little 'long-

---

[14]Mbiti, p. 176.

[15]One thinks of South Africa's Bishop Desmond Tutu and President Nelson Mandela as prime examples. In speaking of Nelson Mandela, possessed with attributes of a traditional African king, Dr. Paris writes, "Such a leader is good-spirited; dedicates himself wholly to the good of all the people; knows his place in the scheme of things; is a willing servant of the masses; listens carefully to them and knows that ultimate authority rests in those whose needs the leader is charged to serve; is confident of his power; is courageous; is willing to negotiate and compromise with his enemies for the good of the community; and always rules wisely in accordance with the desires and needs of the community; and is open to the idea of a expansive community of ever-increasing diversity." Paris, p. 139.

[16]Paris, p. 96.

term future,' priests seldom function as traditional biblical prophets.[17]

Beliefs

> "...to live is to be caught up in a religious drama...Names of people have religious meanings in them; rocks and boulders are not just empty objects, but religious objects; the sound of the drum speaks a religious language; the eclipse of the sun or moon is not simply a silent phenomenon of nature, but one which speaks to the community that observes it...the whole of existence is a religious phenomenon; man is a deeply religious being living in a religious universe."[18]

The African world view sees the community--comprised of individuals--'at home' with the world rather than 'at odds' with it. It is a 'holistic' perspective, seeing all as a source of power to be balanced and controlled rather than divided into a sacred/secular dichotomy. "[B]ehind everything is a brooding, mystical power present in humans and objects--in different degrees of strength and effectiveness."[19] Essential elements of this perspective combine the visible/invisible nature of the world, with community and hierarchy existing in both visible and invisible manifestations.

These visible/invisible worlds intersect. All humans and

---

[17]Mbiti, p. 181.

[18]Mbiti, p. 15. "For black Africans, living means existing in the bosom of the community; it means participating in the sacred life--and all life is sacred--of the ancestors; it means a prolongation of the ancestors and preparing one's own prolongation through descendants. There is a true continuation of the family and of the individual after death..." Vincent Mulango, "Traditional African Religion and Christianity," in Olupona, p. 120.

[19]Gerhardus Oosthuizen, "Traditional Religion in Contemporary South Africa," in Olupona, p. 39.

nature belong to this inclusive, single world order. Over all is

a supreme being, creator, the father of all that exists.[20]

African traditional religion is oral religion. Handed down

by elders, kings and queens, medicine men and women, parents and

priests, this oral heritage constitutes a living inheritance of

myth, legend, proverb, prayer and worship. It depends not on

text, a 'lifeless script' which would imprison and constrict the

legacy.[21]

Relationships--rather than dogma and propositions--are the

emphasis. Sensitivity to others--which seeks integration with

the world--is the goal. "The more one ties things together, the

more power and transcendence, for power flows through

relationships."[22] This world view has difficulty with the cold,

rationalistic emphasis propagated so much in modern societies.

Rather than cold, calculated analysis, deep sensitive attainment,

focusing on the community and human beings within that community,

is the emphasis.

A great strength of the tradition is its resilient capacity

for adaptability, tolerance and change. To absorb foreign

influence--whether 'gods' of neighbors and enemies, 'saints' of

the missionary enterprise or worship practices of colonists and

---

[20]Mulago in Olupona, p. 119.

[21]Huston Smith, The World's Religions, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 368, 370. The oral tradition has great benefit. It protects the memory, gives power to observe the sacred through non-verbal channels and emphasizes what is important. "Writing has no limits, and can proliferate to the point where people get lost in its endless corridors. Secondary material comes to blur what is important."

[22]Zuesse in Olupona, p. 173.

invaders--demonstrates an openness and respect for spiritual power, "wherever it originated."[23] This tenacious, hardy and flexible approach maintains the traditional world view, even when incorporated into Christian, Muslim or urban settings.

Scholar, professor and pastor John Mbiti identifies a fivefold view of existence held by most African religious practitioners.[24] An adaptation of his analysis follows.

(1) 'The Supreme God.' Theologian Dr. James Evans states, "...humanity in relationship to God is the central theme of traditional African thought."[25] Though somewhat removed from the world, this 'high god' described by Dr. Evans is the creator, sustainer and great incomprehensible one. He holds together the 'web of relationships' between humans and their environment. All know of him, as if by instinct. This 'parent' of lesser gods is too highly exalted to receive prayers or sacrifices directly from common humanity. The task is left to specialists and spiritual beings.[26]

(2) Spirit Beings--those specifically created and those who were once human beings--often serve as intermediaries between the Supreme God and humanity. Three categories of spirit beings

---

[23]Albert Raboteau, <u>Slave Religion</u>, (New York: Oxford Press, 1980), p. 4.

[24]Mbiti, p. 15.

[25]Evans, James, <u>We Have Been Believers</u>, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), p. 100.

[26]Booth, Newell, "African Religions," in Pat Alexander, ed., <u>Eerdmans' Handbook to The World's Religions</u>, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1994), p. 159; Mircea Eliade, <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 1</u>, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 12; Raboteau, p. 8; and Mbiti, p. 39.

directly affect the destiny of the community--both collectively and individually.

Divinities and God's associates are mythological figures, nature spirits and deified heroes, created by God. The Yoruba of West Africa have over 1,700 such divinities (orisha). These spirits are present in the lives of humankind at every level-- environmental, individual, social, national, and cosmic--working both for good and ill. Sacrifice, divination and possession relate humankind to these gods.[27]

Spirits, the remains of human beings when they 'die' (being no longer remembered), are everywhere present, unpredictable and invisible.[28] Their too frequent appearance will disturb the community. Possession by these spirits--often a sought for experience--occurs throughout African society.

The living-dead provide the close link between humankind and God. They comprise the most numerous of the intermediaries. These departed ones (by physical death) speak the language of humans and of the gods. They convey "human requests, needs, prayers, sacrifices and offerings to God, sometimes relaying His response back to human beings."[29] The whole community--the living and departed--thus approach and communicate with God not

---

[27]Raboteau, p. 11.

[28]"...for African peoples the spirits are a reality and a reality which must be reckoned with, whether it is a clear, blurred or confused reality." Mbiti, p. 89.

[29]Ibid.

as individuals, but in a communal sense.[30]

Through keeping alive the name of the departed, one keeps the living-dead 'alive' in the spirit world. Usually five generations is the amount of time before the living-dead, recognized by their name, enter the realm of 'spirit' becoming nameless 'its' or 'objectified spirits.'

Libations--beer, milk, water and food--are left for the newly departed to appease and symbolize communion, fellowship and remembrance. One "neglects the veneration of his ancestors at the risk of sickness, misfortune and even death."[31]

(3) Humankind, kings and queens. The living and about to be born constitute the center of ontological life. Life is cyclical. Transmigration can occur.[32] One "merely passes from one form of life to another form and, under the best of circumstances, returns to historical life time and again."[33] The family--by the veneration and homage they give to the living-dead--enable the successful reintroduction of these departed into

---

[30]"The dead form the invisible element in the family, in the clan, in the tribe, and this invisible element is the more important. In all ceremonies of any significance, on the occasions of birth, marriage, death, funerals, or investiture, it is the ancestors who preside, and their will yields only to that of the Creator." Mulago in Olupona, p. 120.

[31]Raboteau, p. 12.

[32]The West African concept of 'soul' may apply to all African peoples. As outlined by Dr. Raboteau, the idea of soul is a complex one. It involves personality (the soul appears before God after death to account for deeds); during sleep may wander (dreams); as the 'shadow' it dies with the body; as the spirit (moral guide) it returns to God at death; and as 'guardian spirit' it enters the realm of the living-dead, awaiting transmigration. Raboteau, p. 32.

[33]Paris, p. 47.

subsequent generations.

Though not all African peoples practice a monarchical system, these rulers, in societies where they do govern, possess a special place within that society, based upon their prestige and position. The office, a direct link between human and spiritual rule, embodies their specific human/divine function. "[T]hey are the mystical and religious heads, the divine symbol of their people's health and welfare." Kings and queens are "God's earthly viceroys," whose office was instituted by God in time immemorial. Their life commands a respect and 'otherness' commensurate with their divinely ordained position.[34]

(4) Animals and plants. Humankind, animals and plants share the 'power, vivacity and health' of the universe. Traditional peoples often divide into groups named after plants and animals (python, crocodile, monkey, lizard, leopard, elephant), holding these 'totems' in an attitude of reverence.[35]

(5) Rocks, mountains and phenomena without biological 'life.' Even these seemingly inanimate objects possess a rich and deep spiritual dimension. Though "[m]ountains, hills and other high standing earth formations, are in no way thought to be god; [yet] they simply give a concrete manifestation of his being and presence."[36]

---

[34]Mbiti, p. 177.

[35]J.O. Kayode, <u>Understanding African Traditional Religion</u>, (Ile-Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press, 1984), p. 11. Totems, (TOH-tem--meaning 'he is a relative of mine'), inspire strong emotions of allegiance and identification. Smith, ed., p. 1084.

[36]Mbiti, p. 55.

Worship

> "Keep me in life and grant me health. O what else must I do, in your opinion? Have patience: I wish to cut grain until I have earned a goat to offer up to you. If you hinder me in any way, will you then perhaps receive anything? Never. And your companions will make fun of you. Therefore, watch over me and you will receive your due."[37]

> -- Prayer: 'Spirits, be Patient.'

> "The most common form of African fellowship with the divine is bodied forth in the mother of the African family waking before dawn and silently saluting the great spirits of the cosmos and the ancestors of her own and her husband's lineages."[38]

Acts of worship can be diverse--"formal or informal; regular or extempore; communal or individual; ritual or unceremonial; through word or deed."[39] Yet, the following common distinctives characterize its practice.

(1) Focus on 'intermediary beings.'[40] Divinities, spirits and the living-dead, as mediators and go-betweens, comprise the heart of worship. In addition to the Supreme God, these lesser divinities and secondary gods--associated with the everyday natural happenings occurring with a people--become objects of

---

[37]John Mbiti, The Prayers of the African Religion, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1976), p. 106.

[38]King, p. 59.

[39]Mbiti, p. 58.

[40]"God is worshiped through obedience to specific imperatives and everyday relationships in the normal course of things--reverence to intermediary beings is reverence to God." Olupona, p. 175.

veneration.[41]

(2) 'Uttered' rather than meditational rite. Sacrifices and offerings, music and movement, dance and song become primary methods of worship.[42] Spirit possession by a god or departed spirit, accompanied by ecstatic behavior, can be the focus, especially within West African circles.

(3) Prayers--short, extemporaneous, and to the point--address life's major concerns and spiritual realities.[43]

(4) Miscellaneous proverbs, songs, creeds and preventive practices. Practical religion--realistic, functional and utilitarian--is central. The mystical, ascetic, and 'spiritual alone' emphasis has little place within African circles. Charms--'batteries for the storage of spiritual power,' amulets and talismans see widespread use. These aids prevent illness and distress, and protect individuals, villages, compounds, houses and fields.[44]

(5) Importance of 'religious specialists.' Priests, helpers and intermediaries (living-dead, elders, rainmakers, diviners, prophets, herbalists and medicine-men) greatly assist in

---

[41]Raboteau, p. 9.

[42]Murphy, p. 5, Mbiti, p. 58 and Raboteau, p. 74. The singing style of "call and response, polyrhythms, syncopation, ornamentation, slides from one note to another, repetition, body movement, hand-clapping, [and] foot-tapping..." characterized this 'shouted' religion. Raboteau, p. 74.

[43]See the table of contents, Mbiti, Prayers of the African Religion, and Mbiti, p. 61.

[44]See King, p. 73 and Raboteau, p. 14. Amulets and talismans are objects, "either natural or of human manufacture, believed to possess power when worn or carried by a person, attached to an individual's possessions, or placed in an area where its influence is desired." Smith, ed., p. 45.

providing the 'bridge' between humankind and the Supreme God.[45]
"No idols are reported in African traditional societies."[46]
Rather, the lesser gods and departed spirits can dwell within and
inhabit a shrine or object. These 'worship devices' are not to
be confused with the gods themselves.[47]

(6) Place and occasion of worship. African religion
possesses a vast assortment of times and opportunities for
worship. An assortment of shrines, temples, altars and groves
are present. Sacred spots—caves, mountains, thresholds or
crossroads, river banks, waterfalls, rocks and old ruins—become
places for altars and temples.[48] Trees are often at the center
of the worship site.

Death, seen as a 'departure rather than annihilation,'
prompts complex, elaborate and expensive rites.[49] Though cut off
from human beings, the newly dead still continue their ties with
the living and departed. Whether those who die enter the
beneficial realm of the living-dead or that of the anonymous,
dissatisfied 'spirits' (becoming wanderers who pester and harm
the living) depends on the children left, the type of death and
the correct burial procedures given to the recently deceased.[50]
The presence of many wives and children—important in life and at

---

[45]Mbiti, pp. 66-67.

[46]Ibid., p. 70.

[47]Raboteau, p. 9.

[48]Mbiti, pp. 73, 70. Temples, while "difficult to define"
are usually houses or buildings cared for by a priest.

[49]Raboteau, p. 13.

[50]Booth, p. 158; Olupona, p. 56; and Raboteau, p. 31.

the time of death--enables support at the time of death and
ensures a decent and grand burial.[51]

Serenity, calm and peace should characterize the time of
death.[52] In addition, "...none should die alone...a strong
belief [is] that the dying are very close to the spirit realm
and, hence, a special blessing might be received from them just
before they cross over."[53] Graves often are decorated with
personal belongings--cups, saucers, bottles, pipes--with these
objects being broken or cracked in order to free their spirits

---

[51]Olupona, p. 56.

[52]Prayers said at death and burial are instructive:

On commending a dying person--

"Our God, who has brought us [to this world],
May she take you;"

Prayer of a dying man--

"And though I behold a man hate me, I will love him.
O God, Father, help me, Father!
O God, Creator, help me, Father!
And even though I behold a man hate me, I will love him;"

Committing the dead body to the grave--

"The gates of the underworld are closed. Closed are the gates.
The spirits of the dead are thronging together like swarming
mosquitoes in the evening, like swarming mosquitoes.
Like swarms of mosquitoes dancing in the evening, when the night
has turned black, entirely black,
when the sun has sunk, has sunk below,
when the night has turned black, the mosquitoes are swarming
like whirling leaves, dead leaves in the wind.
Dead leaves in the wind, they wait for him who will come
for him who will come and will say: 'Come' to the one and 'Go' to
the other,
And God will be with his children. And God will be with his
children."   Mbiti, The Prayers of the African Religion, pp. 97-
99.

[53]Paris, p. 95.

and allow them to follow the deceased.[54]

Ethics/Motivation

"...[R]eligion permeates the whole life of the black
Africans--their personal, family, and socio-political life.
Religion has the psychological and social function of
integration and equilibrium; it enables people to
understand and value themselves, to achieve integration, to
accept their situations in life, to control their
anguish."[55]

"Religion as the strongest element in the traditional
background, exerts greatest influence on the thinking and
living of the people concerned."[56]

The all-pervasive nature of African religion provides the

'genesis, text, and impetus' for ethical action. Practice is

learned through reason, myth, proverb, oral tradition and

ritual.[57] With no written text or formulated creeds, "[r]eligion

in African societies is written not on paper but in people's

hearts, minds, oral history, rituals and religious personages

---

[54]Raboteau, p. 83.

[55]Vincent Mulago, "Traditional African Religion and
Christianity," in Olupona, p. 127. The integrative nature of
religion is seen in the following from Bishop Le Roy (La religion
des primitifs), as quoted in A. Kagame (La philosophis Bantu
comparee), in Olupona, p. 127. "Religion...in Africa, if it is
involved in everything, is also confused with everything: with
laws and received customs, feasts, rejoicing, mourning, work and
business events, and accidents of life."

[56]Mbiti, p. 1.

[57]Paris, p. 41. Among some African people, the teaching of
thousands of proverbs--not in isolation but in totality--
inculcate "a kind of poise, a stance toward life, a way of
looking at things...It is the total impact of the proverbs that
finally matters, and their teachings are worked deep into the
initiate through countless repetitions, through dancing, singing
and art work." (Written of the Bavani cult of the Lega in Evan
Zuesse, "Perseverance and Transmutation in Traditional Religion,"
in Olupona, p. 123).

like the priests, rainmakers, officiating elders and even kings.
Everybody is a religious carrier."[58]

A group ethos and ethic defines the "very essence of African
traditional communal identity." The "we-ethos...we-law...we-
logic...and we-ethical yardstick" is the means by which the
community measures its cosmological and ethical reality.[59]
"Patriarchs, matriarchs, living-dead, elders, priests,
divinities/spirits are the daily guardians or police of human
morality."[60] The community centered and sanctioned ethical
framework influences the entire motivational and ethical
structure.

Specific moral traits of African traditional religion stem
from this foundational communal ethic. Chastity before marriage
(for the woman), hospitality, kindness expressed through
generosity, retributive justice, truth telling and rectitude,
honesty, covenantal faithfulness and honor/respect for the
elderly identify common elements of good character.[61] A
'vitalistic,' non-legalistic/juridical viewpoint emphasizes
communion with others and the natural environment, whether local,

---

[58]Mbiti, p. 3.

[59]"The kind of ethics that is based on values of money,
personal comfort and affluence, greed, and avarice, is for all
intents and purposes individualistic and is at variance with
African traditional communalistic ethics. Such perfervid
individualism paves the way to the selfish way of life. This way
of life disturbs the harmony which existed in African traditional
societies with their spirit of communal living, the very essence
of African traditional communal identity." Friday Mbon, "Socio-
Religious Ethics and National Development" in Olupona, p. 106.

[60]Mbiti, p. 200.

[61]E. Bolaji Idowu, <u>Oldumare: God in Yoruba Belief</u> (London:
Longmans, 1962), pp. 157-168, as quoted in Paris, p. 88.

global, or cosmic.[62] A respect for living, with the ultimate

motive to maintain, prolong and perpetuate life, sometimes gives

sanction to polygamy and extra-matrimonial activity.[63] Service,

to the community, a "central value of communal life" promotes

hospitality, beneficence, forgiveness and forbearance.[64]

The status of women is one held in tension and marked by

ambiguity. On the one hand, traditional religion elevated

females with a recognition of their religious authority as

subdivinities, priestesses and religious authorities. To West

African peoples, the woman is more than a mother alone. She is

"instrumental in the economic marketplace...controls certain

industries--cloth, spinning, goods...[and holds a] high economic

position. Women were traders...some independently

wealthy..raising food for [the] family--planting and maintaining

crops."[65]

On the other hand, a differing perspective sees the societal

duty of marriage, where getting married and bearing children "is

---

[62]To "attain a tranquil equilibrium of interacting forces
within the self and between the self and environment"--being
'cold' rather than 'hot' (unstable, excitable, dangerous,
intense), is a goal of this sense of communion with others and
the world. See Evan Zuesse, "Perseverance and Transmutation in
Traditional Religion," in Olupona, p. 177.

[63]Vincent Mulago, "Traditional African Religion and
Christianity," in Olupona, p. 131.

[64]See Murphy, p. 7, Zuesse in Olupona, p. 179, and Paris,
pp. 136-144; 148-152. The 'downside' of this communal ethic is
in treatment of those who are 'different.' Often seen as
threats, albino, twin, triplet, or deformed infants are
categorized as 'out-of-the-ordinary.' As heralds of misfortune,
these 'different ones' can be killed or ostracized. See Mbiti,
p. 106 and Booth p. 157.

[65]Cheryl Gilkes, "The Politics of 'Silence,'" in Paul
Johnson, ed., African-American Christianity, pp. 87-88.

the greatest hope and expectation of the individual."[66] As

expressed in traditional proverbs, motherhood is the woman's

fulfillment.[67] Polygamy and levirate marriage--promising many

descendants, with attendant possibilities of pleasant death and

membership in the living-dead--seem to benefit males more than

females.[68] Also, statements by African women themselves indicate

the oppressive stance reinforced by the religious thought and

culture.[69]

---

[66]Mbiti, p. 120.

[67]"A woman is a flower in a garden; her husband is a fence
around it"..."The woman who has children does not desert her
home." John Mbiti, "Flowers in the Garden," in Olupona, pp. 59,
64.

[68]Clitorectomies in pubescent girls and women develop sister
ties, give group support (through consolation, food and song),
ensure future fertility and remove vestiges of maleness (Carmody,
p. 56). On the other hand, this practice seems to limit female
freedom and autonomy, inhibits fulfillment and gives further
evidence to the stifled position held by women amongst these
traditional peoples. Also, male supremacy in a polygamous
household seems apparent in the following societal endorsed
proverb: It is said in Kenya, "'Axes carried in the same bag
cannot avoid rattling,' to mean that, among other things, it is
not terrible if co-wives 'rattle' with each other...They belong
together as a family." Mbiti in Olupona, p. 66.

[69]Mercy Oduyoye writes, "When I look at the mold in which
religion has cast women, the psychological binds of socioeconomic
realities that hold us in place, our political powerlessness, and
the daily diminution of our domestic influence by Western-type
patriarchal norms, I call what I see injustice. No other word
fits. I do not wish to be pushed to the point where I must bare
my breasts, throw off my clothes, or beat pots and pans in the
streets, but as an African woman I do want to be given a
hearing." Mercy Oduyoye, Daughters of Anowa, (Maryknoll, New
York: Orbis, 1995), p. 157.

Socio-Economic/Culture

"In our traditional African society we were individuals within a community. We took care of the community and the community took care of us. We neither needed nor wished to exploit our fellow men."

-- President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania[70]

"To be blessed implies having children and food, and to be healthy, but this is the case only if the whole community shares it."[71]

The sense of community, "the paramount moral and religious value among African peoples," overpowers all other socio-economic qualities.[72] Apart from the group, no one achieves fullness. Interdependence and social cohesion--whether individual/ community, society/nature, people/ancestors--express themselves in the communal ideal.[73] Taboos regulate selfish behavior.[74]

This community consciousness expresses itself within the family and all encompassing religious arena. Terminology used within the family--the large, closely knit community of blood relatives--expresses this awareness. Within this larger family,

---

[70]Friday M. Mbon, "Socio-religious Ethics and National Development," in Olupona, p. 105.

[71]Gerhardus Oosthuizen, "Traditional Religion in Contemporary South Africa," in Olupona, p. 41.

[72]Paris, p. 72.

[73]Evans, p. 101, and Joseph Omoyajowo, "The Place of Women in African Traditional Religion," in Olupona, p. 78.

[74]"Anyone who works against community life will be punished by the gods," Kayode, p. 10, and "Ostracism is the most dreadful punishment...every person tries to keep the norms of the community to avoid the shame of ostracism and embarrassment it will cause other members of the family unit." Friday Mbon, "Socio-Religious Ethics and National Development," in Olupona, p. 102.

all elderly men and women, aunts and uncles included, are called 'father' or 'mother.' Closer aged persons become 'brothers' and 'sisters.' The spouse of a brother, uncle or cousin is referred to as 'our wife.'[75]

Preserving harmony with spiritual protectors incorporates the world of divinities and ancestors into this community understanding. "In descending order of power from the supreme God, through the subdivinities, ancestral spirits, communal and familial leaders, to the youngest child, the highest good of each is the same, namely, the preservation and promotion of the community's well-being."[76]

The concept of time--a long past, a present and practically no future ("what has happened, what happens and what will soon happen")--runs counter to Western notions of an infinite, extended future, a world growing 'better and better day by day.'[77] Focus on the past, the 'golden age long ago,' becomes uppermost. Events--their quality and intensity--are primary. Compared to these occurrences, time takes on an inconsequential status.[78]

Ties to the land--the 'roots of existence' which bind communities mystically with the departed--become extremely

---

[75]Paris, pp. 72, 77-78.

[76]Ibid., p. 131.

[77]Olupona, p. 41, Evans, p. 142, and Mbiti, pp. 16-24.

[78]Ibid.

important.[79]   Birth, puberty, initiation, marriage, procreation,
old age, death, and entry into the community of departed/company
of spirits--the 'rhythms of nature'--acquire a cosmic dimension
through their ties to the ground, to animal and total creation
worlds.

African culture, expressed through art, is too often an
overlooked dimension.[80]   Carvings are not solely 'works of art.'
Rather, they become 'useful objects' of spiritual and ceremonial
significance.[81]   Stylized objects--masks, headdresses, sacred
staffs, and ceremonial implements--express religious ideas and
major values.[82]   The sense of abstraction (portraying elements of
the human face and body in an abstract way) summons a response
within participants, a response centered upon the spiritual world
beyond that of the visual.   The attitudes engendered, whether awe
or dependence, bonds between living and deceased, empowerment and
confidence, are the important evocative purposes of this art.

An inner, unseen, spirit world is exteriorized through

---

[79]"For Africans, the ground has a religious charge,
mystically uniting past and present generations...To remove
Africans by force from their land is an act of such great
injustice that no foreigner can fathom it." Mbiti, pp. 182, 164.

[80]For example, E.H. Gombrich's The Story of Art, (London:
Phaidon, 1972), and H.W. Janson's History of Art, (Englewood
Cliffs, New Jersey, 1965), completely omit any extensive
descriptions of African art.

[81]As such they first "concretize the invisible spirit world;
bring the subconscious to conscious; and finally [serve for]
entertainment and aesthetic pleasure." Chukwunyere Kamalu,
Foundations of African Thought, (London: Karnak House, 1990), p.
88.

[82]The dark ebony woods used express the color of civilized
life...the lustrous, well-oiled skin of a beautiful woman.
Eliade, p. 12.

carvings, metal work and pottery. Masks become the abode of unseen spirits.[83] As components of altars used to commemorate the departed, mementos of the living-dead, or depictions of spirits who appear before village members, these works of art become representational forms of the gods, spirits and ancestors themselves.[84] Terrible looking figurines can serve to rid areas of evil influence.

Politics

> "In black Africa, 'religion permeates everything. Its guiding influence extends to political, social, and family life. In general, the religious spirit prevails over the political.'"[85]

Rapid change continues to influence aspects of African society. Africa's percentage of those becoming urbanized (the "homogenization process of secularism") is among the highest in the world.[86] The continuing effects of colonization--the shift of political authority from the aristocracy of monarchs and priests to an educated or military elite--will likely remain.[87] Yet, we cannot discount the continued influence African traditional religions have on political structures within the

---

[83]Kamalu, p. 90.

[84]Ibid., and Eliede, Vol. I, p. 89.

[85]Vincent Mulago, "Traditional African Religion and Christianity," quoting from A. Kagame, La philosophie Bantu comparee, p. 304, in Olupona, p. 127.

[86]Gerhardus Oosthuizen, "The Place of Traditional Religion in Contemporary South Africa," in Olupona, p. 35.

[87]Adu Boahen, African Perspectives on Colonialism, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. 110.

continent.

The sheer tenacity and depth of the traditional belief system make it an underlying force in almost all political activity.[88] An expression of this depth is the growth of independent, 'Ethiopian/Zionist Pentecostal Churches,' wherein the strong influence of traditional cosmology remains, promoting self-improvement and political rights. These groups offer a vent for anti-colonial hostility and proclaim a pride in African culture.[89] As a reaction to industrial and material growth, many peoples seek a retreat--even within urban centers--to reformulations of traditional religious expressions which characterized their 'communal village,' pre-industrial life.[90]

---

[88]"African traditional religions show little inclination, as some 19th century missionaries had assumed, to wither with the advance of Christianity and 'Western' civilization." Ian Harris, Longman Guide to Living Religions, (Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1994), p. 72. Also, "...the subconscious depths of African societies still exert a great influence upon individuals and communities, even if they are no longer the only final services of reference and identity." Mbiti, p. 262.

[89]Boahen, p. 88. As an overall assessment, Dr. James Evans describes, the "pull of secular, materialistic, hedonistic, narcissistic and pessimistic culture, yet also the magnetic hold of a spiritual, integrated, communal and hopeful counter-culture." Evans, pp. 5-6.

[90]Bennetta Washington Jules-Rosette, "Tradition and Continuity in African Religions," in Olupona, p. 157.

Manners and Customs

"These...terms [Dynamism, Totemism, Fetishism and Naturism] show clearly how little the outside world has understood African religions...African religions and philosophy have been subjected to a great deal of misinterpretation, misrepresentation, and misunderstanding. They have been despised, mocked and been dismissed as primitive and underdeveloped. One needs only to look...to see the derogatory language used, prejudiced descriptions given and false judgments passed upon these religions. In missionary circles they have been condemned as superstition, satanic, devilish and hellish."[91]

"These [medicine-men and women] are the specialists who have suffered most from European-American writers and speakers who so often wrongly call them 'witch-doctors'--a term which should be buried and forgotten forever."[92]

Guidance concerning sensitive manners and customs of traditional African peoples clusters around terminology; general attitudes; greetings and gestures; and broad implications relating to the African and African American consciousness.

Terminology. *Using the following terms to replace misleading ones shows sensitivity and grace.*

* 'Spirits' or 'the living dead' for 'ancestors' or 'ancestor spirits.' To use the latter implies the only members of the spirit world are the ancestors of the once living.[93]

* 'Acts of family remembrance' rather than 'worship' of ancestors. Remembering the living dead does not mean one worships them.[94]

---

[91]Mbiti, p. 10.

[92]Ibid., p. 162.

[93]Ibid., p. 80.

[94]Ibid., p. 8.

* African 'peoples' or 'ethnic groups' rather than 'tribes.' This removes the negative connotations so often associated with the latter.

* 'Primal religions' seems to be a current, useful term to describe the thought and practice of many African peoples.[95]

In addition to the above mentioned terms (witch-doctors, dynamism, totemism, fetishism, naturalism) and descriptions (superstition, satanic, devilish, hellish) *the following are best avoided.*

* 'Animism.' Due to its connotations with religious evolution theory ('animist' religion equates with simplistic, uncultivated conceptions), Dr. Mbiti writes, the term should be 'abandoned once for all.'[96]

* 'Primitive' religions. Characterizing religions as 'primitive, savage, lacking imagination and emotion, of elemental evolution' describes those religions in derogatory undertones.[97]

* 'Magic.' The sensible and complex nature of traditional African religions makes them much more than simple rites of magic.

* 'Paganism, barbarism and ignorant beliefs.' These concepts promote inadequate understanding and demonstrate lack of acceptance and appreciation for African religions.[98]

General Attitudes. Many of the fifty-two African countries

---

[95]Ibid., p. 11. 'Indigenous' religions appears to have acquired negative implications.

[96]Ibid., p. 7.

[97]Ibid.

[98]Olupona, p. 1.

follow specific manners and customs unique to their nation or
ethnic group. Broad considerations which apply to most African
peoples may include the following:[99]

(1) Time. Needs and experiences of the individual often
take precedence over schedules and fixed moments of time. Be
aware of this tendency for flexibility in meeting appointments

---

[99]Throughout the entire African continent, Muslim influence,
in varying degrees, impacts local custom. Awareness of general
manners and customs applicable to Islamic influence is helpful.
The following matters, adapted from Roger Axtell's Gestures, (New
York: Wiley and Sons, 1991), pp. 158-159, may assist.
     * Posture. Avoid putting feet on tables or furniture. Show
respect through avoidance of leaning against walls, slouching in
chairs, and keeping hands in pockets.
     * Feet. Refrain from pointing with the feet or showing the
sole of the foot. Soles of the feet are the 'lowest and dirtiest
part of the body.'
     * Beads. Fingering beads (akin to Catholic rosary beads)
does not possess religious significance. These 'worry beads' are
often nothing more than tension relievers.
     * Right hand and side. Use the right hand to eat, touch and
present gifts with. The left is generally regarded as 'unclean.'
     * Hand shakes. Though regarded as important, the grip may
be much less firm than that of Europeans or Americans. Shake
hands with a woman only if she extends her hand first.
     * 'Touch.' Muslim men often are 'touchers.' Long
handshakes, grasped elbows, even hand-in-hand by two males while
walking may be common.
     * Distance. Body space when talking together may be much
closer than for Westerners.
     * Eye contact. During discussion, long and direct eye
contact with Muslim men is often important. Staring is not
necessarily rude (except at women).
     * Photographs. Ask permission to photo individuals or
groups.
     * Outward-displays-of-affection. Men-women touching in
public is frowned upon.
     * 'No.' The gesture 'no' may often be done by tilting the
head backward, raising eye-brows, jutting out the chin or making
a clicking sound with the tongue.
     * 'Thumbs up.' This gesture often expresses positive, 'I am
winning' connotations.
     * Pets. Keep dogs and other household pets away from Muslim
friends.

and plans.[100]   Also, travel between destinations--due to less developed infrastructure--takes much longer than in many Western nations.

   (2) Group orientation. The communal nature of society puts the needs and importance of the group far ahead of that of the individual.[101] Consider the total picture, rather than the isolated individualism so common in European/American culture. Especially avoid verbal abuse and public criticism.

   (3) Humility. A self-effacing, humble attitude goes far to promote camaraderie and mutual respect.

---

   [100]"The U.S...tends to be inflexible when it comes to time. Everything is done according to a schedule with little or no deviation. Meetings must begin on time and end on time. The entire day is segmented into time slots, and the American becomes uneasy or nervous if the schedule is interrupted or if little is accomplished.

   In Africa, time is viewed as flexible, not rigid or segmented. People come first, then time. Anyone in a hurry is viewed with suspicion and distrust. Since trust is very important, individuals who follow inflexible time schedules will have little success. The African wants to sit and talk--get to know the person before discussing business...

   Many times foreigners misinterpret this [people arriving several hours late] as laziness, untrustworthiness, lack of seriousness in doing business, or even lack of interest in the venture. It is understood among friends that even though everybody agrees to meet at a given time, they will not actually gather until much later...

   If a foreigner appears too task-oriented, the African counterpart interprets it as planned foul play. If hurried through business negotiations, the African suspects cheating." Philip Harris and Robert Moran, Managing Cultural Differences, (Houston, Texas: Gulf Publications, 1991), pp. 515-516.

   [101]"A feeling common throughout Africa is the sense of [ethnic group] responsibility and brotherhood. When [ethnic group] members go to the cities for jobs or education, their enhanced stature brings the responsibility of assisting [ethnic group] brothers. This obligation often imposes a burden on the successful member far in excess of his income...

   [Ethnic group] is a major factor in who gets what job, especially in the civil service, even though jobs in an office seldom go to members of the boss's [ethnic group], as they used to." Ibid., p. 513.

(4) Authority. Respect increases with age. To an African, "...the older one gets, the wiser one becomes--life has seasoned the individual with varied experiences...age is an asset. The older the person, the more respect that person receives from the community, and especially from the young...if sincerity, respect, and empathy are shown, the American will receive a positive response. Respect for elders tends to be the key to harmony in African cultures."[102]

Greetings. When addressing monarchy, one often uses the third person, even when speaking through interpreters or aides, as this connotes respect befitting the 'awesome presence' of the regal figure.[103] Avoid public displays of affection between men and women. Contrary to common notions, Africans, in general, display little physical contact upon greeting. Kneeling or bowing may take place, but a reserved dignity--maintained by little physical contact--is more the norm.[104]

Before setting down to business activities, it is important to get to know each other. "Friendship comes before business." Winning trust and confidence takes precedence over any business or military 'deal.' "...[I]nterpersonal relationships are...based upon sincerity. [Most] African societies are warm and friendly. People generally assume that everyone is a friend until proven otherwise. When Africans smile, it [generally]

---

[102]Ibid., p. 517.

[103]Evan Zuesse, "Perseverance and Transmutation in Traditional Religion," in Olupona, p. 177.

[104]"Embracing one another physically after a long absence is not typically 'African.'" Paris, p. 80.

means they like you. When smiles are not seen, it [generally] is a clear sign of hate and distrust."[105]

Gestures. Be aware that parts of the body (hair and nail clippings, saliva, clothes) may possess ritual or taboo significance.[106] Staffs, reminders of elders with their canes, may serve as channels with the living-dead. Graves and grave dirt are not to be tampered with. In West Africa, crossroads, red peppers, fuzzy feathers and medicinal herbs/objects acquire special significance.

Broad Implications. The following general attitudes assist in understanding issues related to Africa and the African American experience today.

(1) Spirituality. "The spirituality of a people is synonymous with the soul of a people: [It is] the integrating center of their power and meaning."[107] Nowhere is this more true than in the African experience. The strength of African religions continues to persist, even in the face of all 'inroads of foreign religions and cultural impacts.'[108]

(2) Psychological impact of colonialism. The mood of optimism and readiness, so present in the African consciousness prior to the 1880s, received a harsh, devastating blow with

---

[105]Harris, p. 514. Tanzania customs may differ significantly from this 'friendly openness.' Grant Skabelund, Culturgrams II, (Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995), p. 258.

[106]Raboteau, pp. 27-34.

[107]Paris, p. 22.

[108]Boahen, pp. 104, 55. The strength generated by the following statement is felt today: "Ethiopia has need of no one; she stretches our her hand unto God."

colonialism.[109]   The loss of human dignity throughout the colonial

decades left deep feelings of inferiority--often feelings which

span the generations.[110]   Simple awareness of this fact may

initiate opportunities for peaceful restoration and respect.

(3)   African and African American consciousness.   Our

responsibility is to maintain genuine sensitivity to the issues

raised and dealt with in this treatment of African religions.

Dr. Peter Paris, describes the implications for the collective

African and African American identity.

> "One of the many devastating effects of both slavery
> and institutionalized racism on the psyches of our people
> was the widespread dissemination of erroneous propaganda
> about African humanity: propaganda that pervaded the Western
> world for many centuries.   Interestingly African Americans
> always knew that the absorption of either negative or
> ambivalent attitudes toward Africa would mirror similar
> attitudes about themselves."[111]

In my judgment, our collective identity as an American

people is strengthened by a 'responsible sensitivity,'

enlightened by all the issues raised and dealt with herein.

---

[109]Ibid., p. 108.

[110]"Colonies demeaned the African as a human being, by
associating blackness, and thus black people, with evil; by
denying the existence of an indigenous African culture and
civilization; and by rejecting the notion that Africans had any
idea of a Supreme Being...condemning them to the state of
Godforsakenness and justifying their continued enslavement and
exploitation...[the] culture of colonies devalued the community
and idolized the individual...protection of private property and
individual rights [became] the basis for social and political
organization."   Evans, p. 5.

[111]Paris, p. 161.

Expressions of African Traditional Religions:
Voodou and Santeria

Two forms of African traditional religions, with continued influence in the Americas, are Voodou and Santeria. While similar in background, these two religious expressions differ significantly in their terminology, ritual, and historical/cultural setting in the Americas. Voodou, practiced primarily in Haiti, gave tremendous impetus to freedom causes of former slaves in that country. Santeria, due to the continuity experienced by slaves brought from West Africa (members of similar African linguistic/cultural settings continued to interact within the large sugar cane slave plantations of Cuba), achieved a 'culture-permeating influence' throughout Cuba. Today, Voodou and Santeria often occur where Haitian or Cuban immigrants are found.[112]

---

[112]I treat these two religions to show the nature of African traditional religions in the Americas. Also, Religious Requirements and Practices, A Handbook for Chaplains (Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Washington, D.C., @1992), does not list these two religions. We (chaplains and chaplain assistants) need understanding of these practices for soldier, family member and deployment ministry.

Voodou: Area and Leadership

Voodou religion focuses upon deities (lwas) of West African origin--the Fon (Benin), Yoruba (Nigeria) and Kongo (Zaire/Angola) peoples.[113] While the religion "thrives in Venezuela, Puerto Rico and the United States," it is most popular in Haiti.[114] Practitioners also inhabit major U.S. cities with Haitian immigrant populations (New York, Miami, and New Orleans).[115]

Benin's Daagbo Hounon Houna, the self-described 'Supreme Chief of the Grand Council of the Vodoun Religion of Benin' continues a line of predecessors dating back to 1452. Within the African world of Voodou, the 74 year old Mr. Houna is like the pope to devotees of the religion.[116]

On the more local level, oungans (priests) and manbos (priestesses) exert authority over practitioners. Bush priests (pretsavans) in Haiti continue a tradition of Roman Catholic/Voodou syncretism based on their knowledge of the proper

---

[113]See Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher, "The African Roots of Voodoo," (National Geographic, August 1995), p. 104, for discussion of the Ghana, Togo, Brazil and Jamaica Voodoo connections. Most of the 2.5 million Ewe peoples of West Africa are devout believers.

[114]Mircea Eliade, ed., The Encyclopedia of Religion, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 15:297. "Haiti is 90% Catholic and 100% Voodou."

[115]In New Orleans, the movement centers on snake god worship. "Drumming, dancing, singing, possession, animal sacrifice, eating and drinking were customary in Louisiana as in Haiti and West Africa." Albert J. Raboteau, Slave Religion, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 75.

[116]Howard French, "At African Heart of Voodoo, Pride Over Heritage," (New York Times, 10 March 1996), p. A-3.

form of Catholic prayers. The three part hierarchy within Voodou

rites includes: (1) ordinary devotees; (2) Ounsi, 'spouses of the

gods (lwa) who make a lifelong commitment to the spirit world;

(3) Oungan and Manbo, leaders who have the power to make new

ounsi and possess great konesan (spiritual power, special

qualities of mind). These priests and priestesses are often

prominent members of Haitian community affairs, highly respected

and often given positions of political influence.[117]

Beliefs

"I believe in scores of gods and spirits, guardians of
earth and sky, and of all things visible and invisible;

I believe that all these...'lwa' or mysteries are
potent, although less majestic than the good God of the
Christians; that some of them came with our ancestors from
our former home in Africa, while others we have learned
about in our Haitian fatherland; that these lwa, like us,
are capable of good and evil, gentleness and anger, mercy
and respect;

I believe in the efficacy of sacrifice; in the
pleasures of living; in respect due to twins; in the careful
cult of the dead, who may return to our abodes; in the
spiritual causation of diseases and misfortune; in the dance
through which we may be 'mounted' by our lwa; in the
possibility of interfering with the normal flow of events by
means of magic; in the efficacy of charms and spells; and in
the Holy Catholic Church."[118]

The following terms, descriptive of the spirit world and

ritual practice, assist in understanding Voodou.

---

[117]Joseph Murphy, <u>Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the
African Diaspora</u>, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), pp. 13, 17; and
Eliade, p. 15:398.

[118]"If a voodou creed existed, sociologist James Leyburn
suggests in <u>The Haitian People</u> (Yale University Press, 1941) that
the creed might read..." as stated. Seldon Rodman, <u>Haiti: The
Black Republic</u> (Devin-Adair, 1954), as quoted in J.A. Knight,
<u>Background Notes on Haitian Voodoo</u>, (Ft. Monmouth, NJ: USACHCS,
ATSC-DMM-R, May 1993), pp. 5-6.

(1) Lwa: The divine spirits who occupy separate pantheons or nations. Lwa are "human beings whose real spirits are preserved after the death of their original bodies, [and are] now capable of riding the corporeal horses of the living."[119] These lwa are the 'other side' of the one served by them...becoming their 'dominant personality' and recognized as their teacher.[120]

Well known lwa include, Rada--generous and benevolent spirits; Petro--strong spirits, who often dominate urban centers, known for their terrible powers; and Ghede, the god of death.[121]

(2) Lemiste: Higher powers associated with natural places or dimensions (cemeteries or sacred springs). Lemo (souls of the dead and ancestral spirits) and lemarasa (sacred twins) join the lemiste in the spirit world.[122]

(3) Bondye (Bon dieu): The high god creator.

(4) Wangas and Gardes: Objects which channel invisible forces to either pursue or protect adherents. An ason (sacred rattle) symbolizes the office and serves as a ritual tool for oungans and manbos. These leaders are experts at the herbalist art of fey (physical and psychic medicines).

---

[119]Murphy, p. 39.

[120]Ibid., p. 41.

[121]Arthur Cotterell, A Dictionary of World Mythology, (Oxford University Press, 1986) as quoted in Knight, p. 11. "Ghede is 'in the Voodoo mythology of Haiti, the hungry figure in black top hat, long black tail coat, and dark glasses posted at the eternal crossroads, where pass the souls of the dead on their way to guinee, the legendary place of origin and the abode of the gods. Ghede is wise beyond all others, since as god of death he holds the knowledge of all those who have lived. He...sustains the living, increases their number and resurrects the dead."

[122]Smith, p. 1126.

Other key beliefs include the nature of the physical head (with importance given to hair), which contains two invisible elements (souls or angels). The 'little good angel' refers to conscience and the capacity for self-reflection/criticism. The 'big good angel' describes the psyche, the source of memory and intelligence, and defines the 'personhood' of an individual.[123]

Ties with Roman Catholic rite and ceremony demonstrate Voodou's eclectic nature. To many rural Haitians, this tie is 'interwoven and inseparable.' Many parallels exist between Catholic saints and the Voodou spirits.[124]

> "...voodou synthesizes African beliefs and practices and embellishes them with rituals and trappings borrowed from Catholicism. Unlike Catholicism, however, voodou has no hierarchy, no formal theology, no seminaries, and no bible. It is not concerned with sin and moral law, considered the province of social custom and Christianity. It does not see life as a perpetual struggle between good and evil but as a mixture of good and evil, in proportions varying from person to person and from spirit to spirit."[125]

At present there exists an 'uneasy peace' between Haitian Voodou and the Roman Catholic Church, due in part to the official status

---

[123]Murphy, p. 23.

[124]Symbolic of this eclectic nature are the ounfo altars, displayed at a recent showing in Los Angeles. "[The altars]...recreated from sanctuaries in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, are dense with such objects as plaster statues of St. Anthony, a laughing Buddha, holy cards, Dresden clocks, bottles of Moet and Candon, goat skulls, crucifixes, Masonic insignia, Kewpie dolls and Christmas-tree ornaments." Also, "[Voodou] is highly eclectic: in an effort to recreate their religious culture in Haiti, African slaves expropriated a huge repertory of influences, including bits and pieces from the indigenous Taino Indians, from Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry and European mysticism." Kenneth B. Noble, "Behind the Occult, Vivid Sacred Art," (New York Times, 4 Feb. 1996), p. H-35.

[125]Rodman, p. 26 as quoted in Knight, p. 11.

of Catholicism as the religion of Haiti.[126]

In rural areas, the religion serves as an extended family practice, where participants remember the dead, invite local gods and family spirits to favor agricultural and kinship lifestyles, and incarnate lwa in the family. Voodou ceremony in these rural areas is marked by simplicity and lack of ostentatious ritual. Urban Voodou sees a more elaborate, institutional and ritualized routine. In urban areas, the worship center (Ounfo) functions as a supplemental, surrogate family, even among those with no 'blood' ties.

Cemeteries are major ritual centers. The Baron (first male buried in any cemetery) serves as overseer. A cross, either on the cemetery gate or in the ritualized center, is the location for deposit of ritual remains for healing, love or luck. The Baron's cross (or crossroads in general) becomes a major 'intersection' of the world of the living and dead.

'Voodou dolls and stick pins,' cannibalism, sorcery, 'zombies' and evil potions are common Western misperceptions of the belief and practice of Voodou. Sham artists and bogus oundoun may engage in 'works of the left hand' to purchase spirits, deal with zombies (disembodied souls or soulless bodies), and establish secret societies to enforce social mores. Their practice, not sanctioned by the Voodou community at large, continues to give 'bad publicity' to the religion.[127]

---

[126]Smith, p. 1126.

[127]Eliade, p. 15:300 and French, p. A-3.

Worship

"The lwa depend on the rites (worship service) for
their sustenance; without these rites, the lwa would wither
and die. So the living community holds the responsibility
for the definition and maintenance of the divine."[128]

Calendar feasts--honoring the day of a Catholic saint,
initiation anniversary, post funeral ancestor rite--mark
occasions for Voodou services. Critical life problems within the
Ounfo community (sickness cure, love problem, job security), lwa
demands, and eating rituals also are times for services.[129]

Adherents base these rites upon the Roman Catholic mass.
The invoking of Catholic saints provides a 'frame around' the
ritual. A center post (poto-mitan), acting as a vertical link
between the sky, earth and underworld, is a critical ritual item.

Voodou religion is danced religion. In the 'dance of the
spirit' movements, gestures, prayers and songs honor the
invisible forces of life. These actions bring the people and lwa
together in a "progressive mutual relationship of knowledge and
growth...'Possession' by a lwa indicates a spirit calling the
devotee to its service."[130] In dance Voodou, "...the lwa 'mount'
the dancing ounsi and bring their immense kenesans for the

---

[128]Murphy, p. 37.

[129]Ibid., p. 27. "In Miami, New York, and Montreal, the
cities with the greatest concentrations of Haitian immigrants,
Voodoo ceremonies are carried on in storefronts, rented rooms,
and high-rise apartments. North American rituals are often
truncated versions of their Haitian counterparts. There may be
no drums, and the only animals sacrificed may be chickens.
However, it is possible to consult a manbo or oungan in these
immigrant communities with ease..." Eliade, 15:300.

[130]Murphy, p. 17.

disposal of those present. This is the purpose of the Voodou

service."[131]

Ethics/Motivation

> "There are women who cannot conceive children, men who
> cannot find work and elders who cannot find peace...Vodoun
> restores hope. It protects our land and brings the cool
> breeze."[132]
>   -- Daagbo Houna, 'Supreme Chief of the Grand
>   Council of the Vodoun Religion of Benin.'

> "Voodou offers a system of beliefs that provides both
> meaning and solace, qualities that are in short supply in a
> country with no public schools, few working sewers, no
> public transportation, little industry and no good roads."[133]

> "[I]t has been treated as a sinister superstition
> that has helped stifle the development of Haiti, the poorest
> country in the Western Hemisphere, and contributed mightily
> to its long history of misery and misrule."[134]

As a stimulant for African memories, impetus for

nationalistic fervor, and solace for survival, Voodou is without

peer in Haitian society. Gine, a term common to most ritual,

stirs memories of the ancestral home (Gine), the continent of

Africa and the watery subterranean home of the spirits.

Voodouism spawns nationalistic fervor. Every rite--in some

way--commemorates independence. On 14 Aug. 1791 there was a

gathering of slaves in North Haiti who, after sacrificing wild

boars to African gods, swore an oath to overthrow their French

slavemasters. They became the only "black people [who]...had the

---

[131]Ibid., pp. 17, 27, 19. This possession ritual
demonstrates the adage "One in not a 'member' of Voodou but a
serviteur of the lwa."

[132]French, p. A-3.

[133]Noble, p. H-35.

[134]Ibid.

experience of rising up and freeing themselves from slavery."[135]
Voodou--the spirit of resistance, rite of liberation, and
subversion of slaveholding authorities--continues this ethos of
resistance and challenge.[136]

Voodou is thought to enhance rural family solidarity,
integrate new immigrants into the often cold world of new urban
areas, provide a legitimate release for aggression and
frustration, give meaning and direction, and offer the poor a
source of strength/celebration.[137]

Art/Culture

Haiti's primitive art movement, uninhibited by academia,
exhibits concrete symbolism, brilliant color and intriguing
detail. The visual Voodou arts, plus sacred dancing, drumming
and chanting, project a 'boldness' and ecumenical embrace which
helps define its uniqueness.[138] The painter becomes 'narrator' of
everyday life and worship, of the exotic and mundane.

---

[135]Noble, p. H-35.

[136]Murphy, pp. 11, 12.

[137]"In the dance the spirit is worked into presence, alive to
comfort, discipline, and enable its children in their struggle."
Murphy, p. 43.

[138]Noble, p. H-35.

Politics

On the local level, discipline and civil sanctions center in the moral and spiritual authority of the oungan and manbo. These religious leaders also can serve as local government officials. Francois Duvalier openly cultivated Voodou associations, dressing as an undertaker, enlisting manbos and oungans as advisors, thus strengthening his position among the lower classes. Rumors of Voodou priests being 'secret police' during his time of power seem accurate.

Manners and Customs

The following issues may assist Unit Ministry Teams when dealing with Voodou practice.

(1) Take the religion seriously. Avoid trivialized, farcical or sinister characterizations. Says Donal Cosentino, head of the folklore and mythology program of U.C.L.A., "Voodou is the paradigm for all African religions, and that's why it can't be belittled...If you can't take seriously Voodou, then you can't take seriously any African religion in the New World."[139]

(2) Avoid stereotyped understandings. "Sensationalized novels and films, as well as spurious traveler's accounts, have painted a highly distorted picture of Haitian religion."[140]

(3) Realize the differing spellings of terms. The spelling 'Voodoo' (hoodoo as a derivative) often carries derogatory

---

[139]Ibid.

[140]Eliade, p. 15:296.

connotations of sorcery and magic, spells and charms.[141]
Academics and practitioners alike use voodou, vodou, vodoun and
vaudau spelling to accurately refer to the religion.

(4) Remember that to adherents, head and hair are
significant. Treat hair and nail clippings with care. Mirrors,
as reflections of the 'other self', become important objects in
worship.

(5) Graveyards and crossroads--as places to honor the
spirits of bygone ancestors and as intersections between the
spiritual and mundane world--require respect.

---

[141]*Ibid.*

Santeria: Area and Leadership

Santeria (sahn-the-REE-ah), an "African way of worship drawn into a symbiotic relationship with Catholicism," draws its origin solely from the Yoruba tradition of Nigeria and Benin.[142] Developed specifically in Cuba, the religion travelled throughout the Caribbean. Today, wherever Cuban immigrants reside, there-- in some form--is Santeria.[143] The "[p]resence of Santeria is gauged by the profusion of botanicas--small retail stores selling herbs and ritual paraphernalia in Santeria communities."[144]

Leadership centers around the babalawo (BAH-BAH-LAH-woh), the priestly office. A priest's competence is determined by his or her mastery of Ifa, the large body of required ritual, poetry, divination and herbal knowledge. Training as a babalawo involves long, disciplined study, divination practice and mastery of the total Ifa process. A santera (priestess) or santeros (priest), less trained in the intricacies of the faith, 'work the spirit' to aid practitioners. A madrina (godmother) or padrino (godfather) assists initiates and cares for the Ile (residence of the senior priestess or priest). The mutual aid fostered within the Ile, with health care being an important facet of the operation, serves a critical function in communities and barrios.

---

[142]Mircea Eliade, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), p. 15:66.

[143]"...nearly everyone of Caribbean background living in North American cities is touched by Santeria in some way." Joseph Murphy, <u>Working the Spirit--Ceremonies of the African Diaspora</u>, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), p. 82.

[144]Eliade, p. 15:67.

Each Ile is autonomous yet may join others for larger
gatherings.[145]

Entry into the movement (being 'born' into the family)
involves acceptance of a godparent guide and fulfillment of a
minimal number of duties. Membership is not a personal choice
but a directive or call directly from one of the spiritual beings
active within the religion. Once in the Ile House, there is a
great distinction between regular attendees and those who have
'made the saint.' Women make up 80% of the adherents, yet
leaders with the widest reputation are men.[146]

Beliefs and Worship

Orisha (aw-ree-SHAH), the elemental powers of life, are
"independent, personal spiritual beings who empower all life."[147]
They "aid and energize devotees to fulfill their destinies."[148]
Santeria describes the development of relationships between human
beings and Orishas.[149]

Originating with the Yoruba peoples and transferred to the

---

[145]Murphy, pp. 84-89.

[146]Ibid., p. 85.

[147]Ibid., p. 84. "Orishas can...be manifest as stones,
plants, rivers, and other natural and human-made objects; as
forces of nature such as thunder and wind; as musical sounds and
human gestures in ceremonies; and as invisible anthropomorphic
personalities whose intercession is sought for all manner of
human problems." Jonathan Smith, ed., The HarperCollins
Dictionary of Religion, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 819.

[148]Eliade, p. 15:66.

[149]"...the word Santeria recalls the correspondence made by
devotees between the saints of Cuban Catholic folk piety and the
spirits carried from Africa. While the relationship between the
African and Christian elements of Santeria is complex, they are
unified in a ritual system of communication with the orishas and
personal spiritual growth." Smith, pp. 960-961.

Americas during slavery, Santeria sustained slaves throughout Cuban/Caribbean life. Huge Cuban slave plantations, with their large numbers of Africans who spoke the same language, possessed the same values, and venerated the same spirits, enabled rather 'pure' development of the religion. Roman Catholic religious influence--the religion of captors in Cuba, enforced by Spanish law--integrated with many Orisha practices.

Adherents show devotion to Orishas through different practices. Divination serves as a means of resolving everyday problems by identifying the source of these difficulties. Sacrifice centers around eating rituals as Orishas must eat (symbolically) to continue their lives. Sacrificial blood--the food of the deities--flows onto stones belonging to the Ile. These stones--wherein the power of the Orisha resides--become the objects through which they are fed. Spirit medium ceremonies see Orisha joining their devotees in dance and song (bembe). During these occasions, orishas perform "spectacular dances, deliver messages, admonitions and advice to community members...[and bring] wisdom for problems."[150] Most demanding of the devotional rituals, the initiation rite is in response to the call of an orisha for such a practice.

Initiation begins with small acts of piety, humility and generosity, while the 'candidate' is under the tutelage of a godparent. Initiation itself (to 'make a saint,' 'crowning,' or 'seating an agreement/pact') is a solemn occasion, wherein the orisha is 'enthroned' in the head and sealed.

---

[150]Ibid.

During the three day initiation rite, the ceremony of induction (kariocha) involves placing stones over the head of the initiate, an action which 'seats' or 'enthrones' the orisha within the head of the individual and marks him/her as a member.

Santeros believe every individual, before being born, is "given a destiny, a road in life, by the Almighty. [It is the] responsibility of the individual to understand his/her destiny and grow with it rather than be a victim of it."[151]

Voodou and Santeria ritual continues to grow in our society, especially in urban areas populated by Hatian and Cuban immigrants. Some military personnel may adhere to these beliefs. Sensitivity and awareness can ensure that the free exercise of religion is upheld for practitioners of these rituals.

---

[151]Ibid.

African Religions: Terms

Amulets and **talismans**: Objects, "either natural or of human manufacture, believed to possess power when worn or carried by a person, attached to an individual's possessions, or placed in an area where its influence is desired."

Babalawo: Leadership centers around the Santeria babalawo (BAH-BAH-LAH-woh), the priestly office. A priest's competence is determined by his or her mastery of **Ifa**, the large body of required ritual, poetry, divination and herbal knowledge. Training as a babalawo involves long, disciplined study, divination practice and mastery of the total Ifa process.

Baron: (First male buried in any cemetery) who serves as overseer of a cemetery, an important Voodou center. A cross, either on the cemetery gate or in the ritualized center, is location for deposit of ritual remains for healing, love or luck. The **Baron's cross** (or crossroads in general) becomes a major 'intersection' of the world of the living and dead.

Bembe: Spirit medium ceremonies see orisha joining their devotees in dance and song (bembe). During these occasions, orishas perform "spectacular dances, deliver messages, admonitions and advice to community members...[and bring] wisdom for problems."

Bondye (Bon dieu): The high god creator.

Danced religion: In the 'dance of the spirit' movements, gestures, prayers and songs honor the invisible forces of life. These actions bring the people and lwa together in a "progressive mutual relationship of knowledge and growth...'Possession' by lwa indicates a spirit calling the devotee to its service." In dance Voodou, "...the lwa 'mount' the dancing ounsi and bring their immense kenesans for the disposal of those present. This is the purpose of the Voodou service."

Diviners: Leaders who use a variety of methods to 'unveil the mysteries of life.' Sometimes through possession, diviners are filled by spirits to read omens and interpret the moves of sacred animals.

Divinities and god's associates: Mythological figures, nature spirits and deified heroes, created by god. The Yoruba of West Africa have over 1,700 such divinities (**orisha**). These spirits are present in the lives of humankind at every level--environmental, individual, social, national, and cosmic--working both for good and ill.

Ghede: In 'the Voodoo mythology of Haiti, the hungry figure in
black top hat, long black tail coat, and dark glasses posted
at the eternal crossroads, where pass the souls of the dead
on their way to guinee, the legendary place of origin and
the abode of the gods. Ghede is wise beyond all others,
since as god of death he holds the knowledge of all those
who have lived. He...sustains the living, increases their
number and resurrects the dead."

Gine: A term common to most ritual, stirs memories of the
ancestral home (Gine), the continent of Africa and the
watery subterranean home of the spirits.

Initiation itself (to 'make a saint,' 'crowning,' or 'seating an
agreement/pact') is a solemn occasion, wherein the orisha is
'enthroned' in the head and sealed.

Kariocha: The ceremony of induction (kariocha), a three day
Santeria initiation rite, involves placing stones over the
head of the initiate, an action which 'seats' or 'enthrones'
the orisha within the head of the individual and marks
him/her as a member.

Lemiste: Higher powers associated with natural places or
dimensions (cemeteries or sacred springs). **Lemo** (souls of
the dead and ancestral spirits) and **lemarasa** (sacred twins)
join the lemiste in the spirit world.

Lwa: The divine spirits who occupy separate pantheons or nations.
Lwa are "human beings whose real spirits are preserved after
the death of their original bodies, [and are] now capable of
riding the corporeal horses of the living." These lwa are
the 'other side' of the one served by them...becoming their
'dominant personality' and recognized as their teacher.
Well known lwa include, **Rada**--generous and benevolent
spirits; **Petro**--strong spirits, who often dominate urban
centers, known for their terrible powers; and Ghede, the god
of death.

Madrina (godmother) or **padrino** (godfather):   Assists initiates
and cares for the **Ile** (residence of senior priestess or
priest). The mutual aid fostered within the Ile, with
health care being an important facet of the operation,
serves a critical function in communities and barrios. Each
Ile is autonomous yet may join others for larger gatherings.

Medicine-men and **women:** The great source of help for sickness,
disease and misfortune. These individuals, respected both
for their person and profession, aid in the prevention and
cure of disease. They purge areas of witches, detect
sorcery and remove curses. They symbolize the "hopes of the
society" and serve as "friends, pastors, psychiatrists and
doctors of traditional African villages and communities."

Mediums and **diviners:** Primarily women practitioners, are 'medicine-type-men' individuals who deal with the living-dead and spirits. Mediums "receive and interpret direct communication with deities, souls of the dead, and other nonhuman powers."

Orisha (aw-ree-SHAH): The elemental powers of life, are "independent, personal spiritual beings who empower all life." They "aid and energize devotees to fulfill their destinies." **Santeria** describes the development of relationships between human beings and Orishas.

Oungan and **Manbo:** Leaders who have the power to make new ounsi and possess great **konesan** (spiritual power, special qualities of mind). These priests and priestesses are often prominent members of Haitian community affairs, highly respected and often given positions of political influence.

Presavans: Bush priests in Haiti who continue a tradition of Roman Catholic/Voodou syncretism based on their knowledge of the proper form of Catholic prayers.

Ounsi: 'Spouses of the gods (lwa) who make a lifelong commitment to the spirit world.

Poto-mitan: A center post, acting as a vertical link between the sky, earth and underworld, is a critical ritual item.

Rainmakers: Some of the most important of traditional leaders, who are employed to both make and stop rain.

Santera (priestess) or **santeros** (priest): Less trained in the intricacies of the faith, they 'work the spirit' to aid practitioners.

Santeria (sahn-the-REE-ah): An "African way of worship drawn into a symbiotic relationship with Catholicism," draws its origin solely from the Yoruba tradition of Nigeria and Benin.

Totems: (TOH-tem--meaning 'he is a relative of mine'), inspire strong emotions of allegiance and identification.

Urban Voodou: Sees a more elaborate, institutional and ritualized routine. In these urban areas, the worship center (**Ounfo**) functions as a supplemental, surrogate family, even among those with no 'blood' ties.

Wangas and **Gardes:** Objects which channel invisible forces to either pursue or protect adherents. An **ason** (sacred rattle) symbolizes the office and serves as a ritual tool for oungans and manbos. These leaders are experts at the herbalist art of **fey** (physical and psychic medicines).

Bibliography

Alexander, Pat, ed., Eerdmans' <u>Handbook to The World's Religions</u>, Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1994.

Axtell, Roger, <u>Gestures</u>, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991.

Axtell, Roger, <u>Do's and Taboos Around the World</u>, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1993.

Beckwith, Carol, and Angela Fisher, "The African Roots of Voodoo," <u>National Geographic</u>, August, 1995.

Boahen, Adu, <u>African Perspectives on Colonialism</u>, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Ways to the Center</u>, Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth, 1993.

Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Prayer in World Religions</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990.

Eliade, Mircea, <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 1</u>, New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987.

Evans, James, <u>We Have Been Believers</u>, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

French, Howard, "At African Heart of Voodoo, Pride Over Heritage," <u>New York Times</u>, 10 March 1996.

Harris, Ian ed., <u>Longman Guide to Living Religions</u>, Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1994.

Harris, Philip, and Robert Moran, <u>Managing Cultural Differences</u>, Houston, Texas: Gulf Publications, 1991.

Johnson, Paul, ed., <u>African American Christianity</u>, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

Kamalu, Chukwunyere, <u>Foundations of African Thought</u>, London: Karnak House, 1990.

Kayode, J.O., <u>Understanding African Traditional Religion</u>, Ile-Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press, 1984.

King, Noel, <u>African Cosmos</u>, Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing, 1986.

Knight, JoAnn, <u>Background Notes on Haitian Voodoo</u>, Ft. Monmouth, NJ: USACHCS, ATSC-DMM-R, May 1993.

Mbiti, John, <u>The Prayers of the African Religion</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1976.

Mbiti, John, <u>African Religions and Philosophy</u>, Portsmouth, New
    Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990.

Murphy, Joseph, <u>Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the African
    Diaspora</u>, Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.

Noble, Kenneth, "Behind the Occult, Vivid Sacred Art," <u>New York
    Times</u>, 4 Feb., 1996.

Oduyoye, Mercy, <u>Daughters of Anowa</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis,
    1995.

Olupona, Jacob, ed., <u>African Traditional Religions</u>, New York:
    Paragon House, 1991.

Paris, Peter, <u>The Spirituality of African Peoples</u>, Minneapolis:
    Fortress, 1995.

Raboteau, Albert, <u>Slave Religion</u>, New York: Oxford, 1978.

Skabelund, Grant, ed., <u>Culturgrams, II</u>, Garrett Park, MD: Garrett
    Park Press, 1995.

Smith, Huston, <u>The World's Religions</u>, San Francisco:
    HarperCollins, 1991.

Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>,
    San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995.

Zeleny, ed., <u>The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. I</u>, Chicago: World
    Book, Inc., 1989.

Orthodox Eastern Church: Outline

Orthodox Eastern Church: Area and Leadership

"One Sunday, last December, at the start of a very
bleak winter, I stood in the front of Saints Peter and Paul
Orthodox Church to receive the sacrament of Chrismation.
The priest anointed my head, eyes, nostrils, ears, lips,
chest, hands, and feet with holy oil and gave me a lit
candle to hold as I stood for Divine Liturgy. After the
anointing I thought about the last step in the process of
icon painting, which is the application of warm oil. The
oil serves to bind together the colors of the icon and to
bring out their depth. At the beginning of the liturgy we
sing the words of Psalm 103, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul and
all that is within me bless his holy name." And I am moved
once again by the sad joyfulness of the chant tones. Once
again I feel the prayers of the congregation as if their
hands hold me up. I think back to the night of Pascha when
we had processed around the church with lit candles and then
stood at the doors of the church chanting 'Christ is risen!'
When the door opened and we all moved into the church, I
felt the presence of generations of Christians standing with
us, generations moving into the church with us, present with
us on Pascha, our ancestors in the faith."[1]

-- Albert Raboteau

Five major regions mark the territorial boundaries of the

Orthodox Church. (1) This church exists in ancient outposts in

the Islamic world--Constantinople (Istanbul), Alexandria,

Antioch, and Jerusalem. (2) Cyprus and Greece--where the

churches trace their lineage to Paul and Barnabas--have a strong

Orthodox tradtition. Greece is the only country where the

Orthodox faith is the official state church. (3) In Romania,

with over fifteen million members, and Georgia are non-

Greek/Slavonic speaking churches. (4) Serbia, Bulgaria and

Russia are home to the Slavonic Orthodox churches. (5) Finland,

the Czech Republic, America and Albania round out those countries

with churches affiliated with the Orthodox tradition. Over 150

---

[1]Albert Raboteau, A Fire in the Bones, (Boston: Beacon
Press, 1995), p. 195.

million adherents belong to the church worldwide.

'Autocephalous'[2] describes the self-governing nature of Orthodox churches. While each church is independent of others, they possess full agreement on matters of doctrine. Full sacramental communion is practiced throughout the loose federation. Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Moscow are the hierarchical heads. No church has overall power, yet the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople is seen as the 'first among equals.' This historic center for Orthodox practice is in ways similar to the Archbishop of Canterbury with the Anglican communion. However, recent events within the autonomous Orthodox Church of Estonia demonstrate again the contested nature of Constantinople's authority.[3]

Priests serve as 'spiritual fathers' to their congregations. At the parish level, priests may marry. Celibate bishops, drawn from monastic communities, minister at higher leadership levels. Only males may serve at the altar as priests, deacons, or altar boys. Women participate in all other areas of church life--lead congregational singing, paint icons, teach classes, serve on parish councils and read epistle lessons.[4]

---

[2]'Autocephalous' (Greek: 'auto' = 'self', 'kephale' = 'head'.)

[3]The Russian Orthodox Church recently severed ties with the Patriarchate of Constantinople over supervision of the Orthodox Church of Estonia. This marks the first time since the establishment of Russian Orthodoxy in 988, that the Russian Church has refused to commemorate the Patriarch in Constantinople. Peter Steinfels, "Russian Church Breaks Off From Orthodoxy's Historic Center," The New York Times, 21 Feb., 1996.

[4]See Frederica Mathewes-Green, "First Visit to An Orthodox Church," World Wide Web Orthodox Church Site, p. 3.

Monastic communities enjoy healthy respect within the tradition. Monasteries remind the faithful of the depths of spirituality; keep the faith alive during difficult times; combat heresy; interrupt political influences; and provide sources for church leadership at higher levels.

Parish priests are addressed as 'Father' with accompanying first name. The terms patriarch, catholicos, metropolitan or archbishop refer to senior bishops who normally serve in the primary city of the territory of influence. An archimandrite is a title of honor for priest-monks. The Ecumenical Patriarchate (Church of Constantinople) is headed by the ecumenical patriarch, an honorific title for the symbolic 'head' of the Orthodox Church.

Beliefs

"Orthodoxy is not just a kind of Roman Catholicism without a Pope, but something quite different..."[5]

Orthodoxy adheres to the seven ecumenical creeds of 325-787. Its break with the Roman Catholic Church stemmed as much from societal/political forces as from matters of doctrine.[6] As an outcome of the Council of Florence (1439), two central issues of disagreement--submission to papal authority in Rome and filioque--galvanized the rift between the two communions.

Filioque, the doctrine that the "Holy Spirit precedes not

---

[5]Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church, (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin, 1964), p. 10.

[6]Denise and John Carmody, Ways to The Center, (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth, 1993), p. 321.

just from the Father but also from the Son" was viewed by Eastern

churches as limiting the sense of power, authority and mystery

surrounding the triune God as Father.[7] Choosing to preserve the

'Father's primal mystery', Orthodoxy saw itself as being in

continuity with the Church since apostolic times, an outlook it

continues to share to this day. It sees no Middle Ages,

Reformation, or Counter-Reformation as part of its heritage.

Rather, Orthodoxy emphasizes a constancy with the church of the

earliest ecumenical creeds and councils.

The Orthodox Church tends to "emphasize prayer and worship

rather than doctrine".[8] The 'dogmas' of faith are expressed in

prayer. The Orthodox tradition makes "few explicit definitions

about the Eucharist and other Sacraments, the next world, Mother

of God, saints and the faithful departed: Orthodox belief on

these points is contained mainly in the prayers and hymns used at

Orthodox services...gestures and actions, all have special

meaning...[being a] symbolic or dramatic faith form."[9] 'Right

belief' is fused to this 'right glory' (worship).

Theology "is seen not merely as an academic or scholarly

pursuit but as preeminently mystical and liturgical...God cannot

be fully described in words but only apprehended, on a level

beyond language, images and intellectual concepts, in a union of

---

[7]The Western Council of Toledo (589) established the filioque clause. (Carmody, pp. 321-323).

[8]Ian Harris, ed., Contemporary Religions: A World Guide, (Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1992), p. 266.

[9]Ware, p. 213.

love."[10]   Voluminous scholarly treatises, acumen in the latest
'new wave' of biblical criticism or theology, and apologetic
finesse, all take a distant second place to matters of the
'Spirit'.   "Whether he was a theologian, a monk, or a
lay[person], the Byzantine[11] Christian knew that his Christian
faith was not an obedient acceptance of intellectual
propositions...but based on evidence, accessible to him
personally in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church,
and also in the life of prayer and contemplation, the one being
inseparable from the other."[12]

Entering into the spiritual tradition from 'within',--
appreciating and experiencing the Orthodox tradition within one's
inner spirit--is an important dimension of Orthodoxy.   This
tradition encompasses "the books of the Bible...creeds...decrees
of Ecumenical Councils and writings of the Fathers; canons,
Service Books, Holy Icons--the whole system of doctrine, Church
government, worship and art which Orthodoxy has articulated over
the ages".[13]

Icons--flat pictures bearing the image of Christ, Theotokos
(Mother of God) or one of the saints--become aids to assist in
this atmosphere of worship.   The icon bestows honor upon the
person represented by it.   Images of Christ also reveal the God

---

[10]Mircea Eliade, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, (New
York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987), p. 570.

[11]Byzantium is that part of the Eastern Roman Empire (476-
1453), headed at Constantinople (Byzantium).

[12]John Meyendorff, <u>The Orthodox Church</u>, (USA: Pantheon
Books, 1962), p. 212.

[13]Ware, p. 204.

who became visible in the Incarnation.[14]

Worship of God and the saints takes place "through or across the images".[15] Icons are "an object of veneration [shown reverence] and honor...but not of real worship...Just as portraits of famous persons or those dear to us serve to remind us of these persons as individuals, sometimes in a very realistic and compelling way, so certain icons can cause a direct contact between the prototype and the faithful, stimulating the latter to make acts of faith and ultimately to manifest the whole divine power".[16]

The aesthetic emphasis applies to the Scriptures also. The Bible becomes a 'verbal icon of Christ', given a place of honor on the altar, carried in procession, kissed and venerated by the faithful. The faithful study it as much for its "religious feeling" as its literary or doctrinal structure.[17]

Within many Orthodox circles, Bible reading developed as a later addition to Orthodox piety. The clearest expression of spirituality was in daily observance of "the church calendar with its fasts, saint's lives, veneration of icons, and most important, its liturgical celebration of the Eucharist...Simple

---

[14]An icon is "not simply a religious picture designed to arouse appropriate emotions in the beholder; it is one of the ways whereby God is revealed to [humankind]." (Ware, p. 214).

[15]E.H. Gombrich, The Story of Art, (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 98.

[16]Meyendorff, pp. 76-77. There is a critical "...distinction...between the 'worship' or 'adoration' (latreia) which is due to God alone, and the 'veneration' (proskynesis) due to images of Christ and the saints..."

[17]Carmody, p. 325.

reading was not required to fulfill obligations..."[18]

Controversies surrounding the Bible--its publication and distribution in former communist territorial churches--will likely continue.[19] Many Orthodox churches take an "instinctive, anti-modernist drive to preserve culture and tradition."[20] Political and theological church divisions, status of deuterocanonical books, competing Bible societies and organizations, and fears over linguistic 'corruption' and degradation of religious language all influence the uneasiness with which Bibles are published and distributed. When coupled with textological divisions over Nestle-Aland Greek texts, the Eastern pre-Nestlean text used by Erasmus, and Hebrew Masoretic/Slavonic scholastic tradition differences, the Bible translation/distribution picture becomes quite complex.[21]

---

[18]Stephen Batalden, ed., <u>Seeking God</u>, (DeKalb, Ill: N. Illinois Univ. Press, 1993), p. 234.

[19]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 241.

[20]<u>Ibid</u>.

[21]"...cumulative impact of these economic, institutional, and textological issues shows that the publication of biblical texts in the contemporary period remains highly politicized despite the veneer of glastnost." Why have Orthodox Churches been so slow to support translation and distribution causes? "(1)...underlying uneasiness about change in the wider culture and religious life...(2) No linguistic standard for modern Russian religious texts...rather many...current political battles over printing of religious texts, particularly translation and publication of modern Russian Bible, inevitably bear the imprint of unresolved textological issues from the nineteenth century." <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 241-242.

Worship

        "Worship comes first, doctrine and discipline second."[22]

        "Communal worship became the dramatic center of Eastern Church life."[23]

Distinctive traits characterize the Orthodox worship tradition. The service itself is marked by "a double spirit of mystery and homeliness...[There is a] sense of awe and wonder in the face of God's immediate presence, accompanied with a feeling of informality and freedom...A worshipper behaves like a child in his Father's house, not like a soldier on parade."[24] Right praise--faith in the 'glorious Orthodox liturgy' is a distinguishing trait of the Orthodox tradition.

        Participants 'stand up for Jesus' for most of the lengthy service. Rather than kneeling, worshipers prostrate themselves, placing their hands on the floor and touching foreheads down between hands in the style of Middle-Eastern Muslims. Kissing-- of the icons, chalice, edge of the priest's vestment, cross at the end of the service--is a regular part of the worship event. Frequent makings of the sign of the cross (with right hand from right to left) occur. Lengthy prayers and rites, and a great deal of singing also identify services.

---

[22]Ware, p. 282.

[23]Carmody, p. 321.

[24]Eliade, p. 574.

Corporate prayer is a primary part of the liturgy.[25] The 'Jesus Prayer'--"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner"--receives a great deal of attention. General sins are usually omitted. Private confession before priests is the expectation for faithful adherents.

Fasting, an exercise to 'stretch, strengthen but not break one' is like medicine for the soul's health. A variety of fasting practices occur, most common being the abstaining from all food or drink prior to the sacrament of the Eucharist.

The divine liturgy continues an ancient tradition. In both form and content, it embodies the earliest of Eastern worship rites. The Easter season is the high point on the liturgical calendar. The liturgy is both a "source and expression" of theology and manifests the essential liturgical approach the Orthodox take to religion.[26] This liturgical emphasis promotes a conservative strand as it "maintained the Church's identity and continuity in the midst of a changing world."[27]

The Holy Spirit is 'dramatically present' to effect the sacraments, bringing the mystery of God to the forefront. Of the seven sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist are the most significant. Infants receive baptism by triple immersion.

---

[25]"Personal prayer is possible only in the context of the community. Nobody is a Christian by himself, but only as a member of the body. Even in solitude, 'in the chamber,' a Christian prays as a member of the redeemed community of the Church." Ware, p. 310.

[26]"[The] Church in the East is primarily a sacramental (or 'mystical') organism, in charge of 'divine things' and endowed with only limited institutional structures." Meyendorff, p. 215.

[27]Meyendorff, p. 115.

Chrismation follows, whereby the priest anoints the baptized with oil, symbolic of reception of the Holy Spirit.

The Church is "first and foremost a eucharistic community."[28] Orthodox alone can take communion. Before communion, the priest takes the round communion loaf, cuts out the middle section imbedded with a seal (the 'Lamb'), and sets it aside. He blesses and places the remainder (the 'antidoron') in a basket. "During the eucharistic prayer, the 'Lamb' is consecrated to be the Body of Christ, and the chalice of wine is consecrated as His Blood."[29] The priest places the 'Lamb' in the chalice, where it falls apart. Communicants receive the elements on a golden spoon. Participants can then receive portions of the 'antidoron' for themselves, visitors or non-Orthodox friends around them.[30]

The structure of the worship setting emphasizes divine beauty. Over time, "...art became inseparable from theology...The good news about God's becoming man; about the presence among men of a glorified and deified humanity, first in Christ, but also through Him and the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary and in the saints--all this 'adornment of the Church' was expressed in Byzantine Christian art".[31]

---

[28]Jonathan Smith, ed., The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 821.

[29]Mathews-Green, "First Visit to an Orthodox Church."

[30]Ibid.

[31]Meyendorff, p. 52. The spiritual importance of this Christian art, a 'contemplation in colors,' is seen in the integrity required of the artists who do much of the work. "It is important that an icon painter should be a good artist, but it is even more important that he should be a sincere Christian,

Icons, emphasizing traditional and conventional Byzantine influence, reflect the divine character. This art stresses an established Greek design with faces, drapery, and gestures, which became such "perfect symbols of the Holy Truth that there appeared no need to depart from them."[32]   These images embodied the grandeur and majesty of an ancient art form.

Socio-Economic/Culture

The Orthodox tradition offers ecumenical potential. It is a model of "Christianity from an era prior to divisions and upheavals which occurred in western Christendom".[33] The majority of Orthodox churches are full members of the World Council of Churches and engage in dialogue with other Christian bodies.

Considering that the Orthodox Church "in all humility believes itself to be the 'one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church', of which the Creed speaks", what is its attitude about Christians who do not belong to its communion?[34] Moderates allow for an inclusiveness even for those not 'visibly' within Orthodox membership.[35] A more rigorous position, held by "many Orthodox

---

living within the spirit of Tradition, preparing himself for his work by means of confession and Holy Communion." Ware, p. 214.

[32]Gombrich, E.H., The Story of Art, (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 101.

[33]Harris, p. 271.

[34]Ware, p. 315.

[35]Ibid., p. 316. "Spirit of God blows where it will, and, as Irenaeus said, where the Spirit is, there is the Church...We know where the Church is but not where it is not, therefore we do not pass judgment on the non-Orthodox."

of great learning and holiness"[36], claims that anyone outside the

Orthodox faith is outside the membership of the Church.

Heretics, schismatics, and the 'liturgically different' have

ceased to be members.   "God may have mercy on them but they

cannot be termed members of the Church".[37]

Relations with the Roman Catholic Church are clouded by many

'psychological barriers and prejudices'. While the doctrinal

divisions concerning Papal authority and the filioque clause

contribute to this rift, the longstanding history of discord and

suspicion between these two traditions defines a greater cause.

> "Orthodox do not find it easy to forget the unhappy
> experiences of the past--Crusades, the 'Union' of Brest-
> Litovsk, the schism at Antioch in the 18th century, or
> persecution of the Orthodox Church in Poland by a Roman
> Catholic government between the two world wars. Roman
> Catholics do not usually realize how deep a sense of
> misgiving and apprehension many devout Orthodox--educated as
> well as simple--still feel when they think of the Church of
> Rome."[38]

The 1964 meeting of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras

I, withdrawing the mutual excommunications arising from the 1054

schism, marked a structural step to reconciliation.

---

[36]_Ibid_.

[37]_Ibid_., p. 317.

[38]_Ibid_., p. 322.

Politics

"[The] great dream of Byzantine civilization was a universal Christian society administered by the emperor and spiritually guided by the Church."[39]

Based, in part, upon an idealistic anthropology which saw humankind, by nature, as God-centered in all aspects of life, Orthodox practice "assumed that the state...could become [and govern in a manner] intrinsically Christian."[40] The goal was "to be a 'symphony' in which both Church and state cooperated in preserving the faith and in building a society based on charity and humaneness."[41]

This outlook promoted mutually advantageous state/religious practice. The self-governing nature of churches allowed them to adopt differing political attitudes without sacrificing doctrinal or sacramental bonds of unity. Their close identity with the language and culture of given national or ethnic groups integrated the institutional church within society, thus preserving national identity. Yet, as is evident in the case of Bosnian Serbs today, this approach can spawn harmful practices.

The independent, 'inward-looking' focus of Orthodoxy contributes to isolation. There is little emphasis on unity across national/territorial lines. It becomes hard to recognize others outside one's own exclusive group. The church's close identification with an often repressive government makes it

---

[39]Meyendorff, p. 213.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid., p. 215.

"difficult to bear witness 'in action' to the universal and transcendent nature of the truth."[42] The "desire to avoid secular commitments... [while maintaining] an inherent respect for the Emperor or his equivalent" yields a witness which can be ineffective in speaking prophetically to nationalistic corporate sin.[43] The church becomes often "nothing more than a mere adjunct of the nation, a mere instrument useful in helping preserve the language and customs of the people."[44]

Rather than declare a 'blanket condemnation', critiques must be taken in context. Traditions vary. Steven Runcinian, in his book Orthodox Churches and the Secular State, raises legitimate issues.

> "Can we support a government whose actions we see to run counter to Christian principles and at the same time remain faithful to those principles? The obvious answer is to say no; but what if the very existence of the Church is at stake? If the Church perishes it will be hard for Christian principles to survive...It is all very well from the safety of a free country to tell others that they should face martyrdom. Their own consciences must decide on that. Moreover, martyrdom is not always the noblest path to take. It is sometimes nobler still to endure humiliation if thus something of value can be preserved."[45]

Political influences strongly affected the creation of the Uniate Church. The Ukrainian Uniate Catholic Church, devised at Brest in 1595-1596, possesses a strong nationalist identity. Though in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, Uniates follow Orthodox rites, observe the Eastern calendar and permit

---

[42]Meyendorff, The Orthodox Church, p. 145.

[43]Steven Runcinian, Orthodox Churches and the Secular State, (Trentham, New Zealand: Wright and Carman, 1971), p. 96.

[44]Meyendorff, The Orthodox Church, p. 145.

[45]Runcinian, pp. 95, 96.

their clergy to marry. The history of violence, deceit and confrontation occurring in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries between Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Uniate churches left a bitterness which continues to this day. From 1946-1988, the Soviet government sought to absorb Uniates into the Russian Orthodox Church. By the mid-1980s, no active Uniate clergy remained, all having been imprisoned or murdered.[46]

Manners and Customs

The following general guidance applies.

(1) Remember, the Orthodox Church is not just a 'displaced cousin' of the Roman Catholic Church.[47] Though related in many areas, the Orthodox is a distinct development, with its own traditions, worship and history of interaction with the larger culture.

(2) The Orthodox emphasis is more on the traditional and conservative than the innovative. Throughout a continuous history from the apostolic times, a history involving persecution, intrigue, and regional interaction, the "...liturgy maintained the Church's identity and continuity in the midst of a changing world."[48] This traditional bias affects most associations involving Orthodox thought and practice.

---

[46]"It will be long before any mutual trust is restored. The Eastern Rite and Orthodox churches have it in common that their combined resurgence of religion and nationalism created anti-Semitic revival...[This area will be] one of the livelier Christian communities in the Europe of 2000." Harris, p. 358.

[47]Ibid., p. 266.

[48]Meyendorff, p. 115.

(3) Scriptures, distributed during peace or military-to-military operations, can promote harmony and demonstrate witness. Remember, however, Bible publishing, translation and distribution can be highly politicized issues in many Orthodox regions.

(4) Uniate Orthodox Catholic Churches of the Ukraine require special sensitivity considering their unique tradition within Orthodox and Roman Catholic circles.

(5) Titles of the Orthodox Church vary. Preferred terms are 'Byzantine Orthodox Church' or 'Orthodox Church'. 'Orthodox Eastern Church' is used in library cataloguing. The term Eastern Orthodox Church, though commonplace, confuses many with the Oriental Orthodox legacy.[49]

---

[49]Eliade, p. 570.

Terms

Antidoron: During communion, the priest blesses and places the remainder (the 'antidoron') of the bread (that without the central seal ['Lamb']) in a basket. "During the eucharistic prayer, the 'Lamb' is consecrated to be the Body of Christ, and the chalice of wine is consecrated as His Blood." The priest places the 'Lamb' in the chalice, where it falls apart. Communicants receive the elements on a golden spoon. Participants can then receive portions of the 'antidoron' for themselves, visitors or non-Orthodox friends around them.

Archimandrite: A title of honor for priest-monks.

Autocephalous: Describes the self-governing nature of Orthodox churches. While each church is independent of others, they possess full agreement on matters of doctrine.

Byzantine: Christian--Byzantium (Constantinople) was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, especially during 476-1453 A.D.

Ecumenical Patriarchate: (Church of Constantinople) is headed by the ecumenical patriarch--an honorific title for the symbolic 'head' of the Orthodox Church.

Filioque: The doctrine that the "Holy Spirit precedes not just from the Father but also from the Son" was viewed by Eastern churches as limiting the sense of power, authority and mystery surrounding the triune God as Father.

Icons: Flat pictures bearing the image of Christ, **Theotokos** (Mother of God) or one of the saints--become aids to assist in this atmosphere of worship. The icon bestows honor upon the person represented by it. Images of Christ also reveal the God who became visible in the Incarnation. Icons are "an object of veneration [shown reverence] and honor...but not of real worship...Just as portraits of famous persons or those dear to us serve to remind us of these persons as individuals, sometimes in a very realistic and compelling way, so certain icons can cause a direct contact between the prototype and the faithful, stimulating the latter to make acts of faith and ultimately to manifest the whole divine power".

'Jesus Prayer:' "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner"

'Lamb:' Before communion, the priest takes the round communion loaf, cuts out the middle section imbedded with a seal (the 'Lamb'), and sets it aside.

Patriarch, catholicos, metropolitan or **archbishop:** Refer to
  senior bishops who normally serve in the primary city of the
  territory of influence.

Uniate Church: The Ukrainian Uniate Catholic Church, was devised
  at Brest in 1595-1596.   Though in communion with the Roman
  Catholic Church, Uniates follow Orthodox rites, observe the
  Eastern calendar and permit their clergy to marry.   From
  1946-1988, the Soviet government sought to absorb Uniates
  into the Russian Orthodox Church.

Bibliography

Batalden, Stephen, ed., <u>Seeking God</u>, DeKalb, Ill: N. Illinois
    Univ. Press, 1993.

Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Ways to the Center</u>, Belmont, Calif:
    Wadsworth, 1993.

Eliade, Mircea, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion,</u> New York:
    MacMillan Publishing, 1987.

Gombrich, E.H., <u>The Story of Art</u>, New York: Praeger, 1973.

Harris, Ian, ed., <u>Contemporary Religions: A World Guide</u>, Essex,
    UK: Longman Group, 1992.

Mathewes-Green, Frederica, "First Visit to an Orthodox Church,"
    World Wide Web Internet Orthodox Church Site.

Meyendorff, John, <u>The Orthodox Church</u>, USA: Pantheon Books, 1962.

Raboteau, Albert, <u>A Fire in the Bones</u>, Boston: Beacon Press,
    1995.

Runcinian, Steven, <u>Orthodox Churches and the Secular State</u>,
    Trentham, New Zealand: Wright and Carman, 1971.

Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>,
    New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

Steinfels, Peter, "Russian Church Breaks Off From Orthodoxy's
    Historic Center," <u>The New York Times</u>, 21 Feb. 1996.

Ware, Timothy, <u>The Orthodox Church</u>, Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin,
    1964.

Liberation Theology: Outline

Liberation Theology

"Any visitor to Central America will be shocked by the living conditions of the majority of people. Inadequate housing, malnutrition, limited access to health care or education, the lack of clean drinking water, unemployment or underemployment, high infant mortality and few channels for political participation accurately describe the situation of the majorities in many third-world countries."[1]

"[A]...theme that is central in liberation theology and has now been widely accepted in the universal church: the preferential option for the poor."[2]

Confronted with the poverty, domination and oppression of their people, many church leaders in 'third world' countries adhere to a theology of liberation. This movement addresses, from the context of Church and Scripture, the social causes of poverty and marginalization; the inner self-worth and humanity of the oppressed; and the freedom from sin which attacks at the most basic levels of humanity.[3]

Media influence--images of the poor flashed on our TV screens, newspapers, magazines, and literary accounts of the scope of misery and oppression--makes it difficult to ignore the individuals and structures of poverty. Liberation theology

---

[1]Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, <u>War Against the Poor</u>, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989), p. 10.

[2]Gustavo Gutierrez, <u>A Theology of Liberation</u>, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), p. xxv.

[3]"There are countless small things [the poor endure]: want of every kind, the abuse and contempt that the poor endure, lives tormented by the search for employment, incredible ways of earning a living or--more accurately--earning a crust of bread, mean bickerings, separations of family members, sicknesses not found at other levels of society, infant undernourishment and death, unjust prices for products and commodities, total confusion about what is necessary for themselves and their families, delinquency springing from abandonment or despair, the loss of one's own cultural values." Gustavo Gutierrez, <u>We Drink From Our Own Wells</u>, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), p. 114.

confronts these needs.

Formulated originally in the 1960s within Latin American
Catholic thought, liberation theology now affects a number of
current theologies. Some Latin American Protestants--especially
those aligning themselves with the World Council of Churches--
follow liberationist thought.[4] Asian, African, Feminist,
Womanist and African-American Theologies all owe an allegiance to
the impact of liberationist thought to inspire their schools.[5]

Belief

> "...I am struck by the orthodoxy of this Christ-
> centered spirituality. It is solidly rooted in the
> teachings of the ecumenical councils."[6]

> "[There is]...general agreement that Christians, by
> virtue of their Christian commitment, should engage in
> social and political action, particularly on behalf of the
> poor and oppressed. That is the presupposition behind
> liberation theology."[7]

The history of liberation theology traces back to Vatican

---

[4]See Mircea Eliade, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, (New
York: MacMillan Publishing, 1987), Vol. 3, p. 398, for a
discussion of Protestant Latin American liberationist influence--
especially with the Church and Society in Latin America (ISAC)
movement. Argentina's Dr. Jose Miguez-Bonino is a great
advocate.

[5]Liberation theology reads Scripture "side by side with the
suffering of the poor. Liberation of the poor in history is the
work of God...the way of discipleship. Scripture is fundamental"
(Eliade, p. 8:506). Some feminists may use goddess traditions;
some black theologians draw more on African culture as their
"central source of liberating praxis." <u>Ibid</u>.

[6]Henry Nouwen, introduction to Gustavo Gutierrez, <u>We Drink
From Our Own Wells</u>, p. xviii.

[7]Charles Davis, <u>Religion and the Making of Society</u>, (New
York: Cambridge Press, 1994), p. 48.

II.[8] This historic council, held from 1962 - 1965, spawned theologies not restricted to rigid 'western' expressions. National, cultural and historical circumstance alike influenced how communities could engage in theological reflection. Over six hundred members of the Latin American Council of Bishops (CELAM) attended Vatican II (almost one quarter of all attendees). The Council greatly impacted their corporate thinking.

Three years later (1968), the CELAM conference in Medellin, Colombia, served as a watershed to "impregnate popular faith with the Gospel. [It] educated people to be active collaborators with God to fulfill their destiny..."[9] At the CELAM gathering in 1979 (Puebla, Mexico), leaders made recommendations based upon the distinct Latin American setting. A recognition "of the dignity of the human person, and particularly of the rights of the poor and oppressed, was declared to be the heart of the [Gospel] message."[10]

There is no single author of liberation, no formal organization, no wealthy donors supporting its cause. Rather, word gets around "through the human authenticity of the actors and actresses..." who engage in its practice.[11] "Liberation

----

[8]Since Pope Leo XIII's "social encyclicals" of 15 May 1891, the papacy has often taken the lead in social reform discussion, though the application of theory--whether 20th century worker priests (France) or Liberation Theology--often produces confusion and provokes controversy. Eliade, p. 3:361.

[9]Ibid. Dr. Gutierrez's work, A Theology of Liberation, served to popularize the appeal of liberation theology. In 1973 it was translated into English.

[10]Ibid., p. 3:397.

[11]Robert McAfee Brown, Gustavo Gutierrez, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990), p. xxi.

theology got underway not as a hardcover industry, but as a continuous exchange of talks, mimeographed materials (often clandestinely distributed), notes, reports on conferences, essays, and responses."[12]

To overlook the devotional foundation, rooted in the Eucharist and spiritual disciplines of the Church, is to do liberation theology a great disservice. In the introduction to <u>A Theology of Liberation</u>, Dr. Gustavo Gutierrez describes the underlining purpose: to "...let ourselves be judged by the Word of the Lord, to think through our faith, to strengthen our love, and to give reason for our hope from within a commitment that seeks to become more radical, total, and efficacious. It is to reconsider the great themes of the Christian life...[The] ultimate reason for the commitment to the poor is grounded 'in the God of our faith,' not social analysis, human compassion or any direct experience we ourselves may have of poverty."[13]

In describing solidarity with the poor, Dr. Gutierrez again outlines the underlying necessity of a consistently lived out spirituality. "Without love and affection, without--why not say it?--tenderness, there can be no true gesture of solidarity. Where these are lacking there is an impersonality and coldness...that the flesh-and-blood poor will not fail to perceive."[14] The celebratory and contemplative dimensions, the necessity of prayer and sacrament, form the basis of the

---

[12]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 185.

[13]Gutierrez, <u>A Theology of Liberation</u>, pp., xiii, xxvii.

[14]Gutierrez, <u>We Drink From Our Own Wells</u>, p. 104.

liberationist's involvement.[15]

By proclaiming God's 'preferential option for the poor,'
liberation theology takes seriously the Gospel texts "to preach
the good news to the poor...to set at liberty those who are
oppressed" (Luke 4:18; 7:18-23). The poor--the exploited,
marginalized, 'non-persons' whether due to economics, piety,
self-understanding, powerlessness, hopelessness, estrangement--
are addressed by the Gospel. The task is: "How do we proclaim to
'non-persons' (the exploited poor) that God is personal, and that
all human beings are brothers and sisters?"[16] To see Christ in
one's neighbor, love manifest in concrete actions, and God loved
in the neighbor, is the challenge. "It is the same God who, in
the fullness of time, sends his Son in the flesh so that he might
come to liberate all persons from the slavery to which sin has
subjected them: hunger, misery, oppression and ignorance--in a
word, that injustice and hatred which have their origin in human
selfishness."[17]

Practice over belief (orthopraxis over orthodoxy) is the
dynamic. Given the demanding, pressing needs of the poor here-

---

[15]"...[the] theology of liberation has also stirred facile
enthusiasms that have interpreted it in a simplistic or erroneous
way by ignoring the integral demands of the Christian faith as
lived in the communion of the church." Gutierrez, A Theology of
Liberation, p., xviii. "...their [young Christian social
workers, catechists, and project coordinators] pastoral work
among the poor was not based on any mere theory or idea but on a
deep, personal experience of the presence of a loving God in the
midst of the struggle for justice and peace." Gutierrez, We Drink
From Our Own Wells, p. xv.

[16]Commission on Theology, Reformed Church in America, "The
Challenge of Liberation Theology", (RCA Distribution Center,
Grandville, Mich., 1986), p. 2.

[17]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 65.

and-now, there is little time to formulate 'nuances of contemplative theological reflection.' A simple (not simplistic) theology centered around the notion of life, the poor and freedom, seeks to maintain a closeness to poor persons, the marginalized, those despised. The luxury of comfortable positions, detached reflection, and subtlety of argument is not afforded those engaged in the day-to-day struggles of the dispossessed.[18]

Brazil's Protestant liberation theologian, Jose Miguez-Bonino, describes the radical nature of this movement, if it is taken seriously. "If liberation theology is on the right track, 'it demands a total overhaul of Christian piety, ecclesiastical institutions, discipline, and theological reflection.'"[19] Orthopraxis focuses on the goal of "not only better living conditions, a radical change of structures, a social revolution; it is much more: the continuous creation, never ending, of a new way to be human, a permanent cultural revolution."[20]

---

[18]"'Wherever we look, we see death.'...It is this that is really meant when we talk of poverty and of the destruction of individuals and peoples, cultures and traditions. In particular, it is what is meant when we speak of the poverty of those most dispossessed: Amerindians and Latin American blacks, and the women of these doubly marginalized and oppressed sectors of the population. Consequently, despite what is sometimes thought, we are not dealing here simply with a 'social situation,' as though it were a state of affairs unrelated to the fundamental demand of the gospel message. Rather we are confronted with a reality contrary to the reign of life that the Lord proclaimed." Gutierrez, We Drink From Our Own Wells, p. 10.

[19]"The Challenge of Liberation Theology", p. 1.

[20]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 21. "...[the] deep human impact and the social transformation that the Gospel entails is permanent and essential because it transcends the narrow limits of specific historical situations and goes to the very root of human existence; relationship with God in solidarity

This emphasis on the practice of the Gospel confronts us all. Esteemed conservative evangelical spokesperson Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, in his favorable review of aspects of liberation theology, sees the necessity for evangelicals to "start sounding off on the imperative of orthopraxis, instead of spending all our time defending right doctrine."[21] The Reformed Church in America's analysis of liberation theology sees traditional orthodoxy as deficient in that too often it exclusively focuses on metaphysical/personal issues and has nothing to say about the concern for social justice. It advocates a primacy of 'theory over practice, belief over behavior.' It further states, "When we pray, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,' and then we don't do what we can do to make earth a bit more heavenly...our theology degenerates into ideology."[22]

There are three levels or dimensions of liberation: Social structures, personal transformation and Christ's freedom from sin. (1) Liberation affecting the social structures sees forces of oppression and marginalization as contrary to God's will. The aspirations and hopes of the 'poorest of the poor' necessitate social change.[23] (2) A personal transformation involves the

---

with other persons." Ibid., p. 134.

[21]C.F.H. Henry, "What is Evangelical Liberation?" Christianity Today, 1975, p. 32 [476].

[22]"The Challenge of Liberation Theology", p. 10.

[23]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 25. "Contemporary persons have begun to lose their naivete as they confront economic and socio-cultural determinants; the deep causes of the situation in which they find themselves are becoming clearer. They realize that to attack these deep causes is the indispensable prerequisite for radical change. And so they have gradually abandoned a simple reformist attitude regarding the

whole person--human beings idealistically transformed in their concept of themselves, in their ability to achieve, to delight in their sense of responsibility for their own destiny, to possess inner freedom from every kind of servitude.   (3) Liberation from sin attacks the 'deepest root of all servitude.'   Jesus the Christ liberates from sin--making humankind truly free, enabling all to live in communion with Him.[24]

The process of being open to the future, to the 'gift of a future encompassing the Kingdom of God,' is essential for liberationists.[25]   God's will is not expressed in present society structures or some "romanticized past, but in the promise of something different--a hoped-for future."[26]   Offering hope to "otherwise hopeless persons, [liberation theology] reminds [us that] things need not stay the way they are; God does not abandon the poor but has a special concern for them; empowers the downtrodden to stand and reclaim their human dignity; creates

---

existing social order, for, by its very shallowness this reformism perpetuates the existing system. The revolutionary situation which prevails today, especially in the Third World, is an expression of this growing radicalization. To support the social revolution means to abolish the present status quo and to attempt to replace it with a qualitatively different one; it means to attempt to put an end to the domination of some countries by others, of some social classes by others, of some persons by others. The liberation of these countries, social classes, and persons undermines the very foundation of the present order; it is the greatest challenge of our time." Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 31.

[24]Ibid., p 25.

[25]"It is a theology which is open--in the protest against trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of humankind, in liberating love, and in the building of a new, just, and comradely society--to the gift of the Kingdom of God." Ibid., p. 12.

[26]Eliade, p. 6:25.

community among those isolated by cruel economic and political

structures; in the midst of death it proclaims the good news of

life."[27]   This entire future hope is grounded in the Church, the

"visible sign of the presence of the Lord within the aspiration

for liberation and the struggle for a more human and just

society.   Only in this way will the message of love which the

Church bears be made credible and efficacious."[28]

Leadership

"All liberation theology originates among the world's
anonymous, whoever may write the books or the declarations
articulating it."[29]

"To oversimplify, Gustavo [Gutierrez] and others like
him live with 'the world's anonymous,' share in their
perplexities, participate in their discussions and actions,
and then, because of their training, are able to record and
transmit accounts of what is going on, accounts that reach
us in the form of books or articles.   And it is out of this
kind of mix of everyday people and special circumstances
that liberation theology is born and reborn."[30]

Liberationist leadership is diffuse.   It is a 'people

oriented' movement where "democratic organization and

participation transcend the role of charisma."[31]   Dr. Gustavo

Gutierrez, a priest who lives and works among the poor of Rimac,

a slum of Lima, Peru, is perhaps the most well-known spokesperson

within United States circles.   His book, A Theology of

Liberation, published in Spanish (1971) and English (1973), is

---

[27]Brown, p. 133.

[28]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 148.

[29]Brown, p. 1.

[30]Ibid., p. 2.

[31]Eliade, p. 8:507.

currently in either its eighth or ninth printing.[32] Through

worldwide contacts, the Ecumenical Association of Third World

Theologians (EATWOT), and dissemination of ideas through the

World Council of Churches, the movement maintains a spontaneous

and informal leadership. The death of El Salvador's Archbishop

Oscar Romero in 1980, six Jesuit priests in 1989, and countless

peasants, students and others by 'death squads' adds a

'leadership by martyrdom' dimension.

At the local level, base ecclesiastical communities (BEC or

base Christian communities) are present alongside parishes in

Latin America. These 'grassroots' organizations are often

'schools of social activism against oppressing powers'. Led by

nuns, priests, educated lay people and the poor themselves, these

groups are "passionately yet intelligently committed to the

struggle for justice. She or he [leaders] walks with the poor as

a person skilled in expressing their collective wisdom..."[33]

Practical concerns--work, food, health care, freedom from

political oppression and terror, empowerment for political

participation--are the focus. These BECs engage in

'conscienticizing evangelization,' the education of the

individual and collective Christian conscience to inspire,

stimulate and help orient to new hopeful structures available

---

[32]In addition to Dr. Gutierrez, other representatives of
liberation theology in Latin America include Juan Luis Segundo
(Uruguay), Segundo Galicea (Chile), Jose Miranda (Mexico), Hugo
Assman and Leonardo Boff (Brazil), Jon Sobrino (El Salvador), and
Enrique Dussel (Argentina). Eliade, p. 3:397.

[33]David Atkinson and David Field, eds., New Dictionary of
Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology, (Downers Grove, Il:
InterVarsity Press, 1995), p. 554. See also Eliade, p. 9:248.

through the Kingdom of God.

Ethics/Motivation

"To work, to transform this world, is to become a [person] and build the human community; it is also to save. Likewise to struggle against misery and exploitation and to build a just society is already to be part of the saving action, which is moving towards its complete fulfillment...building the temporal city is not simply a stage...rather...part of a saving process which embraces the whole of humanity and all human history."[34]

"This is the mission entrusted to the church, a hard mission: to uproot sins from the political order, to uproot sins from the economy, to uproot sins wherever they are. What a hard task! It has to meet conflicts amid so much selfishness, so much pride, so much vanity, so many who have enthroned the reign of sin among us."

-- Archbishop Oscar Romero[35]

Based upon a clear understanding of the Gospel message, an identity (solidarity) with the poor and suffering, and an ongoing commitment to the 'God who liberates,' the liberationist movement possesses a 'prophetic vigor' which impels it to action.[36] Practicing poverty as a "commitment of solidarity and protest...an act of love and liberation...[a demonstration of] solidarity with the poor and a protest against poverty," gives an integrity, genuineness and authenticity to the cause. Seeing the present as a time of solidarity, prayer and martyrdom instills a

---

[34]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 91.

[35]John Nelson-Pallmeyer, p. 73.

[36]"It used to be called mercy, then charity, then commitment; today it is called solidarity. To give food to the hungry...drink to the thirsty...clothing to the naked...shelter to the homeless...and to welcome the stranger are actions so basic that at the end of time we shall have to render an account of them. Solidarity is written into the very substance of the church..." Written by clergymen in Santiago, Chile, as quoted in Gutierrez, We Drink From Our Own Wells, p. 101. See also A Theology of Liberation, pp. xiv, xix.

motivational dynamic without peer.[37]

The Church, traditionally wedded with philosophy for its application to society, now dialogues with new disciplines-- sociology, psychology, biology, economics, and political science. With charity, spirituality, and sensitivity to the anthropological aspects of revelation, a Church characterized by service rather than power seeks to 'do the truth.' In the midst of racism and machismo, marginalization of the elderly, children and other 'unimportant' persons, the ethical task of the church is clear:[38]

> "What the Church needs today goes beyond authoritarian or desperate attitudes, beyond mutual accusations, and beyond personal disputes, all of which are only an expression of an inviable situation and an attitude of personal insecurity; what it needs is a courageous and serene analysis of the reasons for these situations and attitudes. This courage and serenity will be the opposite of a facile emotionalism which leads to arbitrary measures, superficial solutions, or evasions, but avoids the search for radical changes and untrodden paths. At stake in all this is the Church's faithfulness to its Lord."[39]

Political Influence

> "We must take a new look at Christian life; we must see how these emphases in the past have conditioned and challenged the historical presence of the Church. This presence has an inescapable political dimension...The characteristics of totality, radicalness, and conflict...preclude any compartmentalized approach..."[40]

---

[37]Gutierrez, We Drink From Our Own Wells, p. 20.

[38]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. xxx.

[39]Ibid., p. 142.

[40]Ibid., p. 32.

> "...all the political theologies, the theologies of
> hope, of revolution and of liberation, are not worth one act
> of genuine solidarity with exploited social classes."[41]

Liberation theology is, in part, 'political theology.'

Phrases like 'grassroots organizers,' 'root causes of the

problem,' confronting "flagrant injustice, political

manipulation, [and] paralyzing corruption..." are used with

frequency. Solutions include theological, personal, social and

political resources available to the Church. The 'irruption of

the poor,' whereby the marginalized learn to speak, organize and

act in new ways, realizing their potentiality (conscientization),

mandates a social dimension of outreach.[42] This leads to the

political influence of liberation theology.

The movement seeks to go beyond the 'tearful statistics' of

poverty and alienation within Latin America. It realizes the

false hopes present in following smooth, pre-established,

patterned steps. The political sphere--with its attendant chaos,

division, openness to misinterpretation--must be entered along

with social, economic and cultural domains. This political

alliance and refusal to evade controversy often leads to "hostile

reactions, [and] frequent attacks on the Church and its

---

[41]_Ibid._, p. 174.

[42]This 'irruption' of the poor contrasts with more
'idealized' views of poverty. "...[according to the privileged]
the Latin American poor are content with their lot; they cherish
only the hope of receiving something when they extend their hands
and beg, and they thank their generous benefactors for such
kindness." Gutierrez, We Drink From Our Own Wells, p. 12.

representatives".[43]

Violence, a reality in the world of Latin American poor, takes many forms. It can be structural, the "institutional and unrepentant violence of the state, especially the oppressive and naked violence of the police and the army."[44] In addition, on a more personal level, violent acts include throwing stones, burning cars, looting and rioting. Liberation theology carries no underlying through-and-through pacifist ethic as practiced by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Gandhi. Counter violence, seen as a last resort in the struggle for liberation, may sometimes be necessary to "oppose the violence which the existing order produces..."[45] At what point such counter violence is justified remains a matter of debate and analysis.

The alliance of theology with politics, and a 'friendliness

---

[43]A part of these hostile reactions are the frequent attacks on the church and its representatives, the "determination to hamper their mission, undermine their reputation, violate their personal freedom, deny them the right to live in their own country, and make attempts against their physical integrity, even to the point of assassination." Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. xliii. Who are the critics? The wealthy--those clever enough to know which way the wind is blowing; the secure who do not want their security challenged; armchair theologians (neo conservatives) who transform the life and death struggle of others into an intellectual exercise; church people who want the church to remain neutral; defenders of tradition who cannot endure the risk of change; and self-criticism which keeps the movement honest. See Brown, p. xxii.

[44]Brown, p. 168.

[45]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 130. See also "The Challenge of Liberation Theology", p. 3. "An important part of Latin American clergy request...that 'in considering the problem of violence in Latin America, let us by all means avoid equating the unjust violence of the oppressors (who maintain this despicable system) with the just violence of the oppressed (who feel obliged to use it to achieve their liberation.)'" "Continent of Violence" in Between Honesty and Hope, p. 84, as quoted in Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 64.

to Marxian analysis,' opens liberationist thought to hostile

criticism.[46]   Bishops, in the poorest of areas, have denounced

dehumanizing institutional structures 'most energetically.'   In

"exposing the deep causes of these injustices, they have had to

confront the great economic and political forces of their

countries.   They naturally leave themselves open to being accused

of meddling in affairs outside their competence and of even being

friendly to Marxist ideas."[47]

Are the criticisms valid?   Is liberation theology nothing

more than "Marxism disguised as Christian social concern"?[48]   Is

the movement "impoverished by reliance on Marxist analysis"?[49]

In answering these questions, we must first look at the

organizational nature of liberation theology.   There is no

elaborate structure, little formal design, and no means of

administrative control.   The movement does not possess a

monolithic, clearly defined category of analysis and faith.

---

[46]Says newly appointed Archbishop of San Salvador, Fernando
Saenz Lacalle, "The theology of liberation is in reality based on
a Marxist rereading of the Gospel, with a tendency toward
violence." Larry Rohter, "A Church Asunder Awaits the Pope in
Salvador," New York Times, 4 Feb. 1996, p. A-10.

[47]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 62.   "Solidarity
with the poor in present-day Latin America is a sure--and quick--
way to win the dislike of the privileged and the wealthy.   The
prevailing social system does not forgive those who are bold
enough to follow this path in an authentic manner." Gutierrez, We
Drink From Our Own Wells, pp. x, 123.   See also Pallmeyer, "Why
is liberation theology--[which] seeks to awaken the dignity and
hope of the poor--considered subversive and dangerous by Low
Intensity Conflict planners while religious philosophies
tolerating earthly misery and promised heavenly rewards receive
broad support?"

[48]Eliade, p. 15:364.

[49]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. 15.

Adherents differ. Depending on country, area and specific local needs, various interpretations and recommendations for social/spiritual change are voiced. The autonomous nature of base ecclesiastical communities promotes their independence. Some may align with 'left-wing guerrilla groups'.[50] Liberationist practice is, however, much more sophisticated and nuanced than any one social, political or economic theory.

The Puebla conference of bishops, a gathering in many ways sympathetic with liberationist thought, criticized Marxist, capitalist and national security state paradigms. The bishops saw Marxism as sacrificing Christian values and creating false utopias sustained only by force. Capitalism only seemed to increase the distance between rich and poor nations. National security states seemed too ready to support dictatorships which abused police power, depriving human beings of their rights.[51]

What is the future of the movement? Throughout Latin America (Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Colombia), as older bishops sympathetic to liberationist causes retire, younger, more theologically/politically conservative bishops are assigned to take their places. The recent elevation of traditionalist Bishop Fernando Saenz Lacalle to Archbishop of El Salvador is seen, "[p]erhaps more than any other recent development" as a signal "that the theology of liberation, the doctrine that has largely

---

[50]"[A]dherents [liberation theology] have clashed with governments throughout Latin America, and some members of base communities have, to the alarm of the Vatican and the local church hierarchy, joined left wing guerrilla groups." Rohter, p. A-10.

[51]Eliade, p. 3:391.

defined the character of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America for more than a quarter of a century, has been forced into retreat".[52]   The Church is experiencing "a pulling back from the strong commitment to social justice and liberation that we saw in the 70's and 80's".[53]   Despite such setbacks, advocates of liberation theology will continue their work in individual parishes and base ecclesiastical communities, serving Christ in solidarity with the poorest of the poor.

Implications

The following points may be helpful.

(1) Self-critical assessment.   Liberation theology challenges us to "read the Bible and hear the gospel through the eyes and ears of the least of Christ's brothers and sisters".[54] It is a call to hear the liberationist analysis with openness and without defensiveness.   "After we have taken care of the log in our own eye as humbly and honestly as we are able, we can worry about the splinter in the eye of the liberation theologians."[55]

---

[52]Rohter, p. A-8.

[53]Ibid., p. A-10.

[54]Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, p. xxv.

[55]"The Challenge of Liberation Theology", p. 2.   See also the following from C.F.H. Henry.   "When the theologians of liberation insist on...the necessity of theologizing out of commitment to the concrete historical situation of the downtrodden, they are in fact calling us, at this one point, back to the heart of biblical theology...we must stand courageously...in championing the Gospel's irreducible relevance for oppressed multitudes, and actively identify evangelical Christianity with the justice God demands in all arenas of human exploitation and oppression...The new order of life implicit in the gospel concerns not only the individual but also [humankind] in society...and it carries a special care for the despoiled and destitute." "What Is Evangelical Liberation?" p. 32 [476].

(2) Awareness. Military operations throughout Latin America may bring U.S. Army personnel into contact with base ecclesiastical communities and workers sympathetic to liberationist causes. A simple understanding of this 'practiced theology' fosters an appreciation of its influence upon local peoples.

(3) Long term effects of U.S. policy. Liberation theology can serve to accelerate change within Latin American societal structures. The potentially volatile nature of the region demands a just, clearly articulated and implemented U.S. policy. To place ourselves within the perspective of the poor may be helpful in determining the best course of action to follow.

(4) Practical implications. On deployments, clear local priests with intelligence personnel prior to any shared ecclesiastical functions. Realize the perceptions of the military in the eyes of the area's poor. If opportunities for interaction with local religious personnel arise, seek understanding of the broad social/political/economic and religious difficulties present.

Bibliography

Atkinson, David and David Field, eds., <u>New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology</u>, Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

Brown, Robert McAfee, <u>Gustavo Gutierrez</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990.

Commission on Theology, Reformed Church in America, "The Challenge of Liberation Theology," Grandville, Mich: RCA Distribution Center, 1986.

Davis, Charles, <u>Religion and the Making of Society</u>, New York: Cambridge Press, 1994.

Eliade, Mircea, ed., <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, Vols. 3, 15, New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987.

Gutierrez, Gustavo, <u>A Theology of Liberation</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1995.

Gutierrez, Gustavo, <u>We Drink From Our Own Wells</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1995.

Harris, Ian and others ed., <u>Contemporary Religions, A World Guide</u>, Essex, UK: 1992.

Henry, C.F.H., "What is Evangelical Liberation?", <u>Christianity Today</u>, 1975, pp. 32-34 [476-478].

Nelson-Pallmeyer, Jack, <u>War Against the Poor</u>, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1989.

Rohter, Larry, "A Church Asunder Awaits the Pope in Salvador," <u>New York Times</u>, 4 Feb. 1996, pp. A-8, A-10.

Rooy, Sidney H., "Reflections on the Theology of Liberation", <u>Reformed Journal</u>, Feb., 1981, pp. 7-12.

Williamson, Rene de Visine, "Theology of Liberation", <u>Christianity Today</u>, 8 Aug., 1975, pp. 7-13.

Sample Analysis: Sri Lanka

The following sample analysis of Sri Lanka uses readily available resources. It is not a 'one-hundred percent,' 'perfect' solution, nor is it excessively detailed or complete. However, it does provide information for deploying commanders, units and soldiers which may be helpful. My intent is to demonstrate that, with a few easily obtained holdings, Unit Ministry Teams can rather quickly come up with useful information for their personnel.

The guidance listed may assist UMTs in their capacity as advisors to their command.

(1) **Resources.** Many of the book resources listed can be obtained through local bookstores (at reasonable prices), libraries or on-post education center libraries/publications centers. See the annotated bibliography for a fuller description of these resources.

* Robert Famighetti, <u>The World Almanac and Book of Facts</u>, 1996, Mahwah, New Jersey: Funk & Wagnalls, 1996.

* Roger E. Axtell, <u>Do's and Taboos Around the World</u>, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1993.

* Roger E. Axtell, <u>Gestures</u>, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1991.

* Grant Skabelund, ed., <u>Culturgrams, Vol I & II</u>, Garrett Park, MD: Garrett Park Press, 1995.

* Edythe Draper, ed., <u>The Almanac of the Christian World</u>, Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1991.

* Russell Ross and Andrea Savada ed., <u>Sri Lanka, A Country Study</u>, Headquarters, Department of the Army, DA Pam 550-96, 1990.

* <u>Country Profile: Sri Lanka</u>, Economist Intelligence Unit, London, UK: EIU, 1994.

* <u>Country Profile: Sri Lanka</u>, 1st Quarter, 1996, Economist Intelligence Unity, London, UK: 1996.

For those so inclined, the Internet's World Wide Web is a 'gold mine' of up-to-date information. The U.S. Army's Internet Civil Affairs country studies or the Central Intelligence Agency's country studies are concise, detailed, 'facts and figures' run downs of almost every country in the world. Dialogue with officials from a given country can take place via the Internet. On-line <u>Encyclopedia Britannica</u> service, where available, can supply an abundance of information. For CD Rom enthusiasts, <u>Microsoft's</u> <u>Encarta'96 Interactive Encyclopedia</u> offers succinct analysis of countries, religions and cultures.

Newspaper articles, especially from papers like <u>The New York Times</u>, and periodicals give excellent analysis of current events, often including the impact of religion and culture within their commentary.

Unit intelligence personnel--G2s and S2s--can share much unclassified information. Allied partners who have deployed or have peacekeeping experience within the area under study are often more than willing to help with valuable information. National Embassies, and State Department Officials within the country studied can also assist.

(2) **Initiative**. At the Brigade, Division and Corps UMT levels, preparing religious/cultural country briefs can be especially helpful. Battalion UMTs get 'force fed' valuable information. By looking at long range training calendars, and talking with intelligence personnel on projected 'hot spots' around the world, UMTs can formulate analysis. If

forwarded to appropriate intelligence personnel, the information may then be included under the G2/S2 country analysis portion of an operation plan. Otherwise, religious/cultural materials are a helpful addition to the religious support annex of an operation plan.

(3) **Creativity.** When conducting briefings with soldiers, use creative approaches. Charts, graphs, visual aids, music, art, historical examples, videos...we are limited only by our imaginations and time/energy constraints. Deploying soldiers are the real benefactors, in addition to the overall success of the mission.

Statistics: Sri Lanka

Commo:	Sri L	Thai	S Kor	U.S.
TV	1:25	1:17	1:5	1:1.3
Radio	1:8	1:5.7	1:1	1:0.5
Phone	1:102	1:41	1:3.3	1:1.9
Newspaper	NA	50:1000	309:1000	255:1000

Health:

Life Expect.	69/74	67/71	67/73	72/79
Hospital	1:356	1:597	1:429	1:198
Doctors	1:6609	1:4227	1:1007	1:404
IMR (Infant)	21:1000	35:1000	23:1000	8.3:1000

Income: $3,000 $5,500 $8,483 $21,809
(Yearly per capita)

Religious Makeup:

Buddhist: 69% (Mainly of Sinhala [native Sri Lankan]
community.)

Hindu: 15% (Mostly Tamil [Dravidian from S. India].)

Muslim: 8% (Moors [Muslim of Berber/Arab ancestry]
and Malays.)

Christian: 7% (Roman Catholic: **6.3%**; Prot: **.8%.**)

Ethnic Makeup:

Sinhalese: 72% (Aryan, largely Buddhist, w/ classes.)

Tamil: 20% (Hindu-Lanka Tamils have been residents
for over 1,000 years [located in north and
east]; Indian Tamils came as laborers in
last two centuries for highland tea
plantations.)

Moor: 6%

Burgher: .3% (European/Asian; Most live in Colombo.)

Veddah: (Only 140 of these aboriginal people are
left.)

Sample Briefing: Sri Lanka

Clergy/Leadership:

Buddhist--17,000 monks, 14,000 novices, 6,000 temples or
monasteries. Monks (Sangha) fall into three major orders:
Siyam Nikaya (6 divisions), Amarapura Nikaya (23) and
Ramanna Nikaya (2). Palipana Chandananda, a 'hardliner
monk', (referred to by some as Sri Lanka's Khomeini), heads
a major order. The Maha Bodhi Society and Buddhist Training
Center for missionaries ensure an active emphasis on
evangelism. At present there is a decrease in religious
vocations (monastics) due to the country's poverty and
social strife. Religious leaders now stress social action,
development, modernization and scientific education at the
expense of monastic life.

Beliefs:

Buddhist--Theravada school. Monks keep alive the Pali language
through transmission of monastic rules, and stories of
Buddha's life/philosophy. Relics of the Buddha (the tooth
temple at Kandy) possess miraculous powers. On the popular
level, Buddhism links with shamanism (tribal
healer/diviners), Hinduism and old god/demon traditions to
form a 'syncretic fusion' of belief.

Hinduism--Female deities and Siva are important gods to Tamils.

Islam--Arab traders, who in the 15th century dominated SE Asia
and Indian Ocean routes, married local women, took on
aspects of popular religion, and contributed to the
syncretic tradition of Sri Lanka.

Worship:

Common pilgrimage sites serve Buddhist, Hindu and
Islam adherents. Near Buddhist shrines are separate altars
to daily gods, those spiritual entities who assist in
everyday life. Kataragama, a popular god in this century,
attracts many worshippers. Hindus worship Kataragama as
Murugan, while Muslims adapt worship to their mosque.
This common devotion by all three religions to sacred
sites/persons is common.

Ethics/Motivation:

The Sarvodaya Sramadana (selfless gift of labor) movement of
Buddhism promotes village renewal. The four stages of
community--cognition, organization, action and balanced
technological upgrading--seek not so much an improved
quality of life as the fuller understanding of reality as
practiced by Theravada Buddhism. This organization, the
largest non-government one in Sri Lanka, is active in over
5,000 of the country's 25,000 villages.

Part of the political unrest is due to Buddhism's seeking to bring back the privileged, unique position it held in Sri Lanka in ancient times (Sri Lankan Buddhist art/literary transmission and history dates from King Ashoka's missionary endeavors in the 3d century B.C.) A 'nation/religion' equation means any issue, involving the welfare of the Sinhalese, is fair game for activist monk participation.

Tamils on the Jaffna Peninsula see all others in the country as 'less civilized inferiors'. Hindu ritual, women chastity and the need to maintain precise class hierarchical distinctions are maintained by this most populous Hindu group. Others (e.g. Buddhist monks) see these same Tamils as an unjustly privileged minority--outsiders, even though these Hindus trace their presence in the country back for at least 1,000 years.

Politics:

The constitution of 23 May 1972, gave Buddhism, as the religion of the majority, a place of prestige. The duty of the state is to protect and favor Buddhism, at the same time assuring all religions of their constitutionally guaranteed rights. Though a majority, many Buddhists see themselves as an 'embattled minority'. Nationalism and race replace the original Buddhist message of universalism, compassion and non-violence.

An independent Tamil state (Eelam), in the Jaffna Peninsula, is the goal of many Hindus. Periodic terrorist attacks attempt to achieve this goal. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE--'Tamil Tigers') killed president Premadasa at a political rally in 1993.

The growth of ethnic consciousness affected the Muslim minority. The necessity of independent Muslim law applied to this minority is an ongoing contentious issue.

Manners and Customs:

General Attitudes--Family and education are the two greatest values within Sri Lankan society. Teachers and individuals with university degrees rank higher in esteem than the powerful and wealthy. Though the traditional class system is fading from societal life, people still tend to marry and associate with others of the same class.

When entering a mosque, remove headgear. Consider all images of Buddha as sacred. Do not touch nor lean against images. Remove all footwear before entering a temple or Hindu shrine.

Greetings--The traditional handshake or namaste (where hands are placed in a praying position, about chest high, accompanied by a slight bow) give greeting. Sri Lankan women seem comfortable shaking hands with Westerners. Avoid embracing a woman when greeting. Extinguish cigarettes before meeting someone. A smile may indicate thanks. Too much smiling by women is considered a form of flirtation. Since remnants of the class system still exist, if you invite someone to sit down and they seem reluctant, don't insist on their sitting. Respect the punctuality of appointments. Titles are important to most Sri Lankans-- address as 'Mr., Mrs., or Miss' as the occasion requires.

Gestures--Nodding the head up and down signifies 'no', while shaking it back and forth indicates 'yes'. This is just the opposite of Western custom. Take care to clarify the intent of such responses. The left hand, as in most Middle East and Asian countries, is considered 'unclean'. Eat only with your right hand, and pass objects from one person to another using only your right hand. Use both hands to receive an object or gift. Consider the head as the most sacred part of the body; the bottom of the feet as the least sacred. Do not touch another's head nor point at anything with your foot. Pointing with the index finger is considered impolite. Do not pass between two people in conversation. If unavoidable, duck slightly and apologize before passing.

Food--Tea is the national drink. It is customary to begin a meeting with tea. Sri Lankans see food as one of the prime sources for potential spiritual pollution. Various restrictions on eating (Buddhists eat no flesh [though some eat fish/eggs], Hindus eat no pork/beef and Muslims eat no pork) apply.

Family--The elderly receive great respect. Women, while having economic and political opportunities outside the home, are expected to maintain household responsibilities. Women do not go out alone after dark.

Annotated Bibliography

One of the difficulties in studying world religions and the impact a specific religion may have on a culture is the sheer amount of information available. Titles abound. Card catalogs and on-line directories overwhelm with their listings.

Questions arise. What is the accuracy of material presented? What is the author's slant and purpose? How can the text assist my purposes? How accessible is the information presented?

This section delineates an annotated bibliography. It first lists the 'top ten resources' for a 'deployment footlocker.' Next, it specifies other reasonably priced books which are available. Then, assets available at libraries and learning resource centers are presented. Finally, there is a limited treatment of helpful Internet, CD ROM and Defense Technical Information Services (DTIC) material.

The 'Top Ten' Resources

The following books and calendar resource are general tools which gave me great assistance. Most are reasonably priced and readily available.

* Spence, David, The Multifaith Calendar, Burnaby, British
      Columbia: Hemlock Printers, 1995.

      Every Army chaplain and chaplain assistant needs this
helpful, accurate, and informative calendar. Artistically done,
the calendar not only lists significant events on days when they
occur, but also explains their importance as a monthly aside.
Individual copies of the calendar, at @ $11.00 each, can be
ordered from Multifaith Resources, P.O. Box 128, Wofford Heights,
Calif. 93285.

* Smith, Jonathan, ed., <u>The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion</u>,
    New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

    Without a doubt, this was my most valued text for my Th.M.
study in world religions. Readable, well-organized, and thorough
(1152 pages), this book is a 'must have.' I especially
appreciated the 'user-friendly' pronunciation guide. List price
is $45.00. Christian Book Distributors, P.O. Box 7000, Peabody,
Maine 01961-7000 offers it for $32.95. ISBN 0-06-067515-2.

* Famighetti, Robert, ed., <u>The World Almanac and Book of Facts</u>,
    Mahwah, New Jersey: Funk and Wagnalls, 1996.

    Up-to-date and packed with information, this resource tool
is compact and reasonable. The statistics and country history
sections are invaluable. Purchase this book at almost any news/
bookstore for under $10.00. Don't settle for other publishers.
<u>The World Almanac</u> gives data on country communications (phones,
radios, newspapers per person) as well as health and economic
indicators.

* Appelton, George, ed., <u>The Oxford Book of Prayer</u>, New York:
    Oxford, 1985.

    This scholarly yet usable book gives representative prayers
from most of the living religious traditions of the world. A
paperback edition is available.

* Meredith, Susan, <u>The Usborne Book of World Religions</u>, London:
    Usborne Publishing, 1996.

    Don't laugh when you pick up this slim paperback. The
'comic book' like pictures may not win scholarly prizes, but they
provide visual appeal. Soldiers can learn much from such a book.
Price is under $10.00. ISBN 0-7460-1750-2. Published in the USA
by EDC Publishing, 10302 E. 55th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74146.

* Axtell, Roger, <u>Gestures, The Do's and Taboos of Body Language
    Around the World</u>, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991.

    This reasonably priced paperback gives great information and
contains an excellent bibliography. The first half describes
gestures--the most popular ones around the world. Then, in the
second half, the text gives a by-country listing of tips helpful
for intercultural communication. ISBN 0-471-53672-5. Price is
under $15.00.

* Smith, Huston, <u>The Illustrated World's Religions</u>, New York: HarperCollins, 1994.

   The aesthetic beauty of this book pleases the senses. With most of the same text as Huston Smith's classic, <u>The World's Religions</u>, the art work and photos of worshipers around the world make this an especially appealing work. Price for the hardcover is @ $30.00. If you can't afford it, get Smith's <u>The World's Religions</u> for @ $12.00. This is the most readable of all the general texts I've read.

* Juergensmeyer, Mark, <u>The New Cold War, Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State</u>, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

   Now out in paperback, this text analyzes the underlying religious motives behind most present day major conflicts. Excellent for bringing one up-to-date on the religious fundamentalist movements (which the author describes as 'religious nationalism') around the world. ISBN 0-520-08651-1. Price is under $15.00.

* Skabelund, Grant, <u>Culturgrams, Volumes I and II</u>, Garrett Park, Maryland: Garrett Park Press, 1996.

   These volumes give the background, people, customs and courtesy, lifestyle, and society traits of @ 150 countries. Four pages are given to each country. These background studies are succinct and have a reputation for reliability and accuracy. Non-profit groups can purchase both volumes for $35.00 each. ISBN 0-912048-86-7 (for set).

* MacDonald, Margaret Read, <u>The Folklore of World Holidays</u>, Detroit, Mich: Gale Research, Inc., 1994.

   The only thing bad about this research guide is its price-- $80.00. When I get back to a deploying unit, this will be one of the first things I purchase. It is filled with data on religious and cultural festivals around the world. Deploying soldiers need to know what celebrations and remembrances are occurring around them in the areas to which they deploy. A day-by-day listing of events around the world is given. Each entry is detailed enough to be thorough and interesting. ISBN 0-8103-7577-X.

Library Resources: The following texts, listed in order of
their helpfulness, may be at your local library or education
center.

* <u>Country Studies</u>, (various authors and editors), Headquarters,
    Department of the Army, DA Pam 550 series.

     Exhaustive studies of various countries around the world.
Sometimes the information is a bit dated, depending on the
edition. The authors give a thorough history and some insight on
practice of religion in the country studied.

* <u>Country Profiles</u>, Economist Intelligence Unit, London, UK: EIU,
    1996.

     Quarterly and yearly updates, in succinct, quickly read
style, which dispatch current information on the country listed.
Though dealing with economics and politics, religious parties are
sometimes treated as a part of the analysis. Outside of the
daily newspaper, this resource is the most up-to-date, in print
product available.

* Harris, Ian ed., <u>Longman Guide to Living Religions</u>, Essex, UK:
    Longman Group, 1994.

     This concise text details the impact of religion on politics
in a country-by-country rundown throughout the world. For its
purpose, there is nothing better. Unfortunately, its price
($75.00) makes it prohibitive for personal libraries.

* Levinson, David, ed., <u>Encyclopedia of World Cultures</u>, Boston:
    G.K. Hall, 1996.

     For detailed analysis of over three thousand world cultures,
this can be your primary resource. Recently printed, the work
incorporates the information found in the old, more cumbersome,
Human Relations Area Files gathered by Yale University. 13
editors, 800 contributors, and 20 translators worked over 10
years to put this massive work together. Each culture has an
extensive 'religion and expressive culture' section. Beliefs,
practitioners, ceremonies, arts, medicine and death/afterlife
sections comprise the heading under religion. Get your library
to procure this set if they don't already have it. Cost is high
($800.00 for ten volumes), but nothing more detailed exists in
the mass publishing market. ISBN 0-8161-1840-X.

* Eliade, Mircea, <u>The Encyclopedia of Religion</u>, 16 Volumes, New
    York: MacMillan Publishing, 1993.

     Newly revised, this is the standard reference work on world
religions. Practically every aspect of religion in the world is
dealt with by a knowledgeable scholar.

* Randal, Gary and Dinah Hanlon, <u>Religions on File</u>, New York:
    Facts on File, 1990.

    Excellent resource for charts, graphs and sketches which
will add visual appeal and stimulation to classes and briefings.
Some libraries purchase a 'reproduction certificate' with the
text, enabling users to run off multiple copies of documents
given. The $155.00 price makes it prohibitive for small
libraries.

* Carmody, Denise and John, <u>Ways to the Center</u>, Belmont,
    California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993.

    Now in its fourth edition, this college introductory
religion course text gives the broad and concise picture of major
religions. In discussing the 'world view' and 'center' of each
subject treated, the authors present a unique and refreshing
approach. Readers can 'get inside the thinking' of someone who
practices the religion treated. The text is available in
paperback for under $35.00.

* Barrett, David, B. ed., <u>The World Christian Encyclopedia,</u> 3
    Volumes, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

    This is a new revision of a standard reference tool first
published in 1982. For detailed facts and figures of all
religions within various countries, this is the place to look.
ISBN 0-19-507963-9. Price: $350.00.

* Turner, B. Kali, <u>MultiFaith Information Manual</u>, Toronto:
    Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care,
    1995.

    Designed for hospital chaplains and staff, this book treats
the sickness and dying rites of various religions and
denominations. Not quite as extensive as one may like, it
nonetheless offers practical information. Available from the
Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care, 35
McCaul Street, Suite 200, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1V7.

* Hastings, James, <u>Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics</u>,
    Edinburgh: T. & T. Press, Scholar Press Reprint, 1981.

    Surprisingly, this multi-volume encyclopedia, a reprint of
an older work, still has an unusual amount of helpful information
on world religions. The treatment of death and burial rites is
especially helpful.

* Carlson, Barbara and Sue Ellen Thompson, <u>Dictionary of
    Holidays, Festivals and Celebrations of the World</u>, Detroit,
    Mich: Omnigraphics, Inc., 1994.

    Listing by day and category, this dictionary concisely
treats holidays in 50 states and over 100 countries. ISBN 1-
55888-768-7.

* Alexander, Pat, ed., <u>Eerdmans' Handbook to the World's Religions</u>, Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1994.

This was the text recommended at our Chaplain's Advanced Course. The editors gathered excellent pictures, articles and charts. I never did find the text 'user friendly.' It seems difficult to get the complete, precise picture of the religions presented.

* Harris, Philip and Robert Moran, <u>Managing Cultural Differences,</u> Houston, Texas: Gulf Publications, 1991.

Outstanding text on cross-cultural communication from a business person's perspective. The authors give practical guidance for various regions of the world.

* Mead, Richard, <u>International Management</u>, Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1994.

Great text designed for business and government workers working in cross-cultural settings. Gives the theoretical background of leadership practices and differences around the world. Very helpful for units working with other Allied armies on military to military or peace operations.

* Johnston, D. and Cynthia Sampson, eds., <u>Religion, The Missing Dimension in Statecraft</u>, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

This extensive text deals with findings and implications of religion's influence on political activity around the world. Especially helpful in treating issues related to harmony and peace amongst the world's religions.

Internet, CD ROM and Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) resources.

The Internet's World Wide Web (WWW) contributes more

information than one could probably use in five lifetimes. Type

in the subject on the Yahoo search engine and an amazing number

of articles, papers and treatments surface. While I love E-mail,

I easily become overwhelmed at the information available on the

WWW. Others may not become as quickly 'bleary eyed' as myself

and can use the WWW with great efficiency. When connected,

various country 'chat boxes' provide ready answers to perplexing

questions. For those who have the On-line <u>Encyclopedia</u>

<u>Britannica</u>, there is a wealth of information.

The following text and resources may be of assistance.

*Joel Beversluis, ed., <u>A Source Book for Earth's Community of Religions</u>, New York: Global Education Associates, 1995.

This book gives a number of E-mail contacts for various world religions. This helpful text also gives addresses, phone and fax numbers for most of the living religions of the world. ISBN 0-9637897-1-6. Price: under $20.00.

* <u>Microsoft's Encarta'96 Interactive Encyclopedia.</u>

This CD ROM provides succinct, up-to-date information on world religions and countries. Cost is under $40.00.

* Stelzer, John, <u>World Religions</u>, Minneapolis, Minn: Quanta Press, Inc., 1993.

Another CD ROM, a sort of 'mom and pop' operation, by two scholars who teach world religions at a community college. A good edition to have on deployments where CD ROM assets are available.

* Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC), Technical Reports.

Located at the DTIC headquarters, 8725 John J. Kingman Road, Ste. 0944, Ft. Belvoir, Virgina 22060-6218, and locations around the country, this center offers a tremendous number of detailed reports. Once in the system, members receive updates of information available. E-mail ordering is possible and DTIC has a WWW home page. I became part of the system too late to include materials in my project. However, the following titles look pertinent to the impact of religions on military operations. Through unit intelligence personnel, UMTs should find the DTIC account for their post or location. Cost of articles is between six to eleven dollars.

* AD-A251 314. <u>Saint, Sinner, or Soldier--Liberation Theology and Low Intensity Conflict</u>.

* AD-E750 956. <u>Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s</u>.

* AD-C956 957L. <u>The Muslims of ASEAN</u>.

* AD-500 667L. <u>The Middle East: A Study of Conflict</u>. (Confidential security listing).

* AD-B198 857. <u>The Impact of Religious Belief in the Theater of Operations.</u>

* AD-A233 866. <u>The Arab Gulf Area and the Conflicts Influencing It.</u>

New and Intense Religious Movements (NIRMs): Outline

New and Intense Religious Movements: Context, Response and Implications for Army Chaplains

"Wake Up and Smell the Karma." These words, on a Philadelphia area billboard, attract listeners to radio station WMMR--93.3. The disc jockey pictured is of the 'Boomer' generation--content, satisfied, in his mid-forties--and undoubtedly enjoys the tunes of the station.

The billboard prompts reflection. The 'Boomer' generation pictured was college-aged in the Sixties/early Seventies. New and intense religious movements (NIRMs) thrived. What long-term effects did these NIRMs initiate? How did the spiritual 'world and life view' of those maturing in this era change?

The children of the generation pictured--the baby 'busters,' 'slackers,' 'twentysomethings,' 'post-boomers,' or 'Generation X,'[1]--now make up the majority of our soldiers. What do these individuals think of 'church?' In what ways have NIRMs affected their religious makeup? What needs--often met by NIRMs--does this population express? How can chaplains and chaplain assistants address these needs within the Army context?

New and intense religious movements--whether described as new religions, alternative religions, marginal religions or cults--are here to stay.[2] Army soldiers, officers and family

---

[1]See Andres Tapia, "Reaching the First Post-Christian Generation," <u>Christianity Today</u>, (12 Sept. 1994), p. 18.

[2]See T. Robbins and D. Bromley, "What Have We Learned About New Religions? New Religious Movements as Experiments," in <u>Religious Studies Review</u>, Vol. 19, #3, (Jul 1993). In part, I borrow the name "New and Intense Religious Movements (NIRMs)" from the book <u>Modern American Protestantism and Its World, #11</u>, <u>New and Intense Movements</u>, ed. Martin Marty (Ann Arbor: MI, 1993.)

members, as representatives of the larger American society,

reflect this trend. Throughout this paper, I argue that as

chaplains, we enhance pastoral abilities by understanding the

context, response and implications presented by these New and

Intensive Religious Movements (NIRMs).

In describing the context of American culture from 1960 to

1995, I address the question 'How did we get to where we are

now?' In identifying the church's response, I look at selected

treatments of NIRMs by my denomination, the Reformed Church in

America. In discerning the implications for Army chaplains and

chapel programs, I identify practical steps whereby we can

implement religious support--geared especially to 18-25 year old

soldiers and their family members. The goal is increased

awareness, heightened pastoral sensitivity, and better religious

support, thus furthering God's Kingdom within the Army setting.

    Despite usefulness in the past, the terms 'cult' and 'sect'
conjure up too many negative images of fear, suspicion, and
antagonism. Social scientists, since the late 1980s, often use
the terms 'alternative religions' or 'new religious movements' to
describe the whole range of Bible sects, transplanted Asian
meditation groups, and therapy/growth groups present today (see
R.E. Gussner and S.D. Berkowitz, "Scholars, Sects and Sanghas,
Recruitment to Asian-Based Meditation Groups in North America,"
Sociological Analysis, 49 (1988), p. 141; and J. A. Saliba,
"Dialogue With the New Religious Movements: Issues and
Prospects," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, (Winter, 1993), p. 51.

Context: Overall Themes

"...the 60s...[was] a decade of social and religious upheaval, the period 1973 through the mid-1980s a time of consolidation...and of deepening division between religious liberals and religious conservatives."[3]

Determining the spiritual makeup of today's soldier begins with an analysis of the setting his or her parents grew up in--the decade of the Sixties. Interpreting themes present in society at large since that time--individualism, secularization, technology and education--coupled with an understanding of society's religious-political makeup, enable us to realize the present setting. A look at changes affecting specific groups--Catholics, charismatics, African Americans, women and world religions/NIRMs themselves--sets the stage for determining a religious support response within the American military structure. When we look at NIRMs within the context of larger societal forces, we can then more fully understand their impact and outline a reflective response.[4]

The Sixties shock, a "time of calamities,"[5] uprooted the "old foundations--national confidence, patriotic idealism, moral traditionalism, historic Judeo-Christian theism."[6] Respected pollster George Gallup identified the early 1970s, years when the direct impact of the Sixties decade was felt most deeply by American society at large--as "one of the lowest points of

---

[3]Robert Wuthnow, Restructuring of American Religion (Society and Faith Since WW II), (Princeton: NJ, 1988), p. 164.

[4]Ibid., pp. 5, 9.

[5]Sydney Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, (New Hampshire: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 1094.

[6]Ibid., p. 1080.

national morale in history."[7]   For many who matured during these
years, it was a time of "anguished self-examination and social
redirection."[8]   "...the cultural conflict of the 1960s" resulted
in a "stripping away of moral authority from major American
social institutions: government, law, business, religion,
marriage and the family."[9]   The impact is still felt by
succeeding generations of Americans--especially 'boomers'--
parents of our present generation of soldiers.

As a result, individualism, a common American trait,
received renewed emphasis.   Sociologist Steven Tipton identified
a key characteristic of American moral culture following the
"storm of events of the 60s" as the "individual seeking to
satisfy his (her) own wants or interests."[10]   Denominational
interest waned.   A 'smorgasbord/supermarket' approach to
religion, where individuals pick and choose spiritual approaches
based on private pietism and personal choice, became the norm.
Since "novelty and individualism" are among the more accepted of
these values, it is not surprising that these prompted
"individuals...[to] pursue different world views, different
meanings and different lifestyles."[11]   In part, the growth of

---

[7]George Gallup, Jr. and Jim Castelli, <u>The People's Religion
(American Faith in the 90s)</u>, (MacMillan: NY, 1989), p. 11.

[8]Wuthnow, p. 185.

[9]Steven M. Tipton, <u>Getting Saved From the Sixties</u>,
(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 29.

[10]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 2.

[11]Eileen Barker, "New Religious Movements: Yet Another Great
Awakening" in P. Hammond, <u>The Sacred in a Secular Age,</u> (Berkeley,
Calif: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1985), p. 46.

NIRMs begins with this phenomenon.

Secularization, the "replacement of...faith with scientific principles and increasing differentiation between religious and secular spheres"[12] took a distinctly American twist. Religion became 'harmless.' It remained "an alternative culture, observed as unthreatening to the modern social system, in much the same way that entertainment is seen as unthreatening. It offer[ed] another world of escape..."[13] Many followers of NIRMs chose such an innocuous world.

For others, the secularizing forces of North American culture, stressing "technology instead of morality, personal enrichment instead of altruistic service, and potential for individual development instead of force of historical traditions"[14] combined with an individualistic, fragmented, 'salvation alone' piety. A two-track, personal/public expression of faith ensued. Americans could still maintain a 'durable faith.' Religious practices and beliefs changed little from the 1930s and 1940s.[15] Yet, due to shallowness of conviction or pietistic retreat, a "seeing...faith as a matter between self and God"[16] alone, only a limited impact was made on the culture at

---

[12]Anson Shupe and David G. Bromley, "Social Response to Cults", in Hammond, p. 58.

[13]Bryan Wilson, "Secularization: The Inherited Model," in Hammond, p. 20.

[14]Mark Noll, A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), p. 548.

[15]Gallup, p. 251.

[16]Ibid., p. 251.

large.[17]

Tremendous growth in education (a 139% increase, from 3.6 million students in 1960 to 8.6 million in 1970)[18] cultivated a more tolerant, liberalized population. Within denominations, this open-minded approach fueled theologies calling for social activism. Within NIRMs, Asian based meditation groups attracted an upper-middle class, higher education membership.[19] Within religious "media entrepreneur founded colleges (Roberts, Falwell, Swaggert...)"[20] and other theologically conservative institutions, a distinct brand of American civil religion--in reaction to the society at large--emerged.

Education spawned scientific development, especially in communications technology. Information handling became a challenge. Computers, Internet data bases, the television and audiovisual glut produced individuals suffering from a kind of "choice-fatigue...[who] thirst for an authority which will reduce their choices and make their lives less stressful."[21]

For many soldiers, computer technology, whether in units or personal quarters, is a popular influence. This interest can encourage new curiosities with NIRMs, whose publicity is readily

---

[17]This is especially true in the military context. To divorce faith from one's soldierly calling and practice is a great temptation.

[18]Wuthnow, p. 155.

[19]This trend seems present today especially when realizing the higher degree of education possessed by current soldiers and officers.

[20]Noll, p. 446.

[21]Richard Kyle, <u>The Religious Fringe</u>, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), p. 201.

available when 'surfing the Internet.' In addition, privatized

dialogue occurs. Individuals (soldiers included) isolate

themselves from other 'flesh and blood' human beings, turning to

computers to meet their needs for intimacy. The computer becomes

a sequestered technological substitute for companionship and

interaction.[22]

Context: The Religious/Political Setting

> "Liberals abhor the smugness, the self-righteousness,
> the absolute certainty, the judgmentalism, the lovelessness
> of a narrow, dogmatic faith. [Conservatives] scorn the
> fuzziness, the marshmallow convictions, the inclusiveness
> that makes membership meaninglessness--the 'anything goes'
> attitude that views even Scripture as relative. Both often
> caricature the worst in one another and fail to perceive the
> best."[23]

The residue of the 1960s encouraged a deep rift in American

society. Writes historian Sydney Ahlstrom, "by 1970 the nation's

sense of unity had fallen to the lowest point since 1861."[24] In

response to this 'decade of upheaval' (1960-1973), liberals

tended to embrace reforms, while conservatives reacted to them.

Theological liberals and conservatives experienced a similar

divide.

> "...the 1960s witnessed the rise of a whole new set of
> issues around which positions 'pro' or 'con' could be taken:
> civil rights, antiwar activism, denominational mergers and
> schisms, new religions, among others. It was as if the bits
> of mosaic that had given shape to the religious topography
> had been thrown into the air, never to land in exactly the
> same positions as before."[25]

---

[22]See Russell Chandler, Racing Toward 2001 (Forces Shaping
America's Religious Future), (Grand Rapids, MI: Harper
Collins/Zondervan, 1992), p. 305.

[23]Wuthnow, p. 133.

[24]Ahlstrom, p. 1081.

[25]Wuthnow, p. 152.

Denominational structures came under attack as being outmoded, overgrown and concerned only with their own survival. Adding to this strain, para-church, special purpose groups multiplied.[26] These groups, added "further layers of bureaucracy to an already highly bureaucratized structure of American religion."[27] The credibility of denominations suffered. Youth experiencing the enthusiasms of NIRMs turned from the stabilizing, supportive influence of traditional churches.

Special interest groups further added to the factionalism Protestantism experienced. Divisions leading to the 'politicized church life of the eighties'[28] were bolstered by these special purpose, para-church groups.[29] (The present intense 'culture war' rhetoric and political influence of the 'Religious Right' can, in part, be attributed to this influence as well.)

This division resulted in the rise of two, parallel 'civil religions' within America, one conservative, the other liberal. On the one hand, the Religious Right led a return to the 'one

---

[26]One para-church cluster focused on healing, prison ministries, Bible studies, charismatic outpourings, world hunger [and conservative political causes], the other seeing political protest, anti-nuclear issues, holistic health, positive thinking and therapy groups as being causes for action (see Wuthnow, p. 131).

[27]Wuthnow, p. 130.

[28]See Noll, p. 453.

[29]"Like weeds in the sidewalk, the growth of these groups may have widened the cracks that only a few decades ago consisted of nothing more than hairline seams...Some...focus exclusively on individual salvation and evangelism, others target energies for social and political concerns...distinct, specialized identities and distinct constituencies, drive a potential wedge between the two emphases that have been precariously welded together in most denominational bodies and local churches" (Wuthnow, pp. 130-131).

nation under God' vision. America, God's 'chosen people and redeemer nation,' must return to her earlier theological and spiritual heritage. From the other perspective, the political-religious Left sought to embrace 'liberty and justice for all,' speaking out for peace and justice as the source of future strength and hope.[30]

For NIRMs, the Religious Right took them seriously, yet too readily applied bombastic political rhetoric against their presence. Alarmist, fanatical and fear inducing accusations became the norm. The more liberal Left, too often took a 'hands off, live-and-let-live' policy. As a result, both young and old, attracted by NIRMs, received little mature, balanced, careful spiritual guidance in the midst of their quest.

Context: Groups Within Religion

> "The American population emerging in the 90s will be
> more Catholic, more non-Western, more Mormon, more
> unaffiliated and less Protestant than it is today
> [1989]."[31]

Considering the turmoil and restructuring of American society from 1960 to 1995, we need to remember that "without the Church, we [our American society] would be much worse off."[32] During these years, in the Church at-large and religion in general, significant changes took place. The rise of NIRMs, influx of world religions, renewal in Catholic circles, public

---

[30]See Wuthnow, pp. 213 ff.

[31]Gallup, p. 265.

[32]Rough transmission of remarks by George Gallup Jr., Theological Student's Fellowship luncheon, Tuesday, 13 Dec 1995, Princeton Theological Seminary.

role played by African American churches in the freedom struggle,
spread of charismatic expression and a new openness to women all
surfaced.   In looking at these changes, we can develop an
understanding enabling us to appreciate the spiritual 'journey'
of our Army personnel and family members.   We can then
intelligently formulate a religious support mission, addressing
needs emerging from NIRM insight.

Realizing that generalizations concerning NIRMs, as with
people's beliefs in general, are "tricky business,"[33] we can
identify the context giving rise to these movements.   Why did
NIRMs arise?   Sociologist Gini Graham Scott identifies two
causes: old religion--impersonal, ritualistic, empty of meaning,
formal, structured, lacking feelings of community--was no longer
applicable.   Attendees to mainline churches were spectators
rather than participants.   In addition, those attracted to NIRMs
came to question the value of an increasingly bureaucratic,
technological, rationally oriented, impersonal, competitive
society.   When protest proved ineffective, individuals turned to
retreatist NIRM solutions.[34]

Sociologists Gussner and Berkowitz describe the
'Disintegration, Neediness and Belongingness (DNB)' theory to
explain those drawn to NIRMs.   NIRMs attract individuals
experiencing: personal disintegration--psychological
disturbances, individual disorientation (D); neediness--for love,
security, self-esteem (N); and belongingness--those with

---

[33]Barker, in Hammond, p. 36.

[34]See Gini Graham Scott, <u>Cult and Countercult, Contributions
to Sociology #38,</u> (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1980), p. 4.

"histories of cynicism, self-hatred, lack of anchors in relationship, [who] never mature in love relations, express token rebellion..."[35](B).

Church historian Mark Knoll describes the sense of community offered by NIRMs and a "harder edged concern for defining faith/practice [which] may explain the above average rates of growth"[36] in NIRMs.

Author Steven Tipton argues that some remain in NIRMs just to enable them to function in American society:

> "In the atmosphere of disappointment and depression that followed the conflicts and failures of the Sixties, many youths sought out alternative religious movements. Disoriented by drugs, embittered by politics, disillusioned by the apparent worthlessness of work and the transiency of love, they have found a way back through these movements, a way to get along with conventional American society and to cope with the demands of their own maturing lives."[37]

These themes--an anti-bureaucratic tendency, personal disorientation, neediness and yearning to belong; desire for a simply defined faith; and stark survival thus identify those attracted to NIRMs. Yet, they speak to us within the military as well.[38]

Though the overall numbers of those who join the ranks of

---

[35]Gussner and Berkowitz, p. 137.

[36]Noll, p. 466.

[37]Tipton, p. 30.

[38]A casual reading of the above identifies why some soldiers join the Army. The camaraderie offered, purpose engendered, basic care provided, and clear direction furnished appeal to many. In a broad sense, the Army itself may serve as a NIRM. I discuss the implications of this finding in the final section of this paper.

NIRMs may not be great,[39] the movement did "redefine the outer limits of religious respectability."[40] This redefinition--in terms of tolerance, pluralism, and 'live-and-let-live' approach-- remains with us and our soldiers today.

Within and without Catholic circles, the liberalizing events of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) inspired an expansive openness. The Church was "shaken by forces of change more powerful and fundamental than those which had been advanced by the Protestant Reformation."[41] These changes fostered a diversity whereby the Church became "more oriented to lay ministry, more internally pluralistic, more socially conscious, more attuned to the larger academic community, more active politically, and more self-consciously ideological than ever before in American history."[42] The ecumenical impact of this internal shift, coupled with a receptivity displayed by Protestants, led to a "calming of previous antagonisms between Roman Catholics and Protestants...[the] most significant ecumenical breakthrough" of the era.[43] This open-minded climate offers us--as Catholic/Protestant chaplains--unparalleled opportunity to address soldier spiritual needs.

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson's repeal of the Oriental

---

[39] "[Though] public concern over cults at times may be intense, little evidence exists that great numbers of Americans were being drawn into the ranks of the cult" (George Gallup Jr., and Jim Castelli, The People's Religion, p. 15).

[40] Wuthnow, p. 145.

[41] Ahlstrom, p. 1015.

[42] Noll, p. 448.

[43] Ibid., p. 537.

Exclusion Act--for the immediate purpose of allowing Hong Kong

immigrants to enter the United States--placed Asian immigrant

quotas on an equal standing with those of western Europe. This

event "unleashed a massive human movement...[which] is the single

most important factor in the rise of new religions" according to

sociologist of religion J. Gordon Melton.[44] The opening of these

immigration quotas not only led to the growth of world religions

within America (Islam and Eastern religions particularly), but

prompted Asian based NIRMs to flourish. The social upheavals of

the 60s, with their idealism and search for meaning, plus the

repeal of the Asian Exclusion Act in 1965 "complemented the

social ferment perfectly, permitting holy men (and occasionally

women) from the East to teach their ways to eager young

Americans."[45]

Within the African American community, the "awakening of

Black America, which became so prominent a fact of the Sixties,

did more than anything else to make that decade a turning point

in American religious history."[46] This awakening was rooted in

the Church. The current popularity of African American

expression of religion--over 23 million being members of some

denomination or faith group--derives in part from its witness

---

[44]J. Gordon Melton, "Flowering of the New Religious
Consciousness", in R. Enroth and J. G. Melton, Why Cults Succeed
Where the Church Fails, (Elgin, IL: Brethren Publishing House,
1985), p. 124.

[45]Timothy Miller, America's Alternative Religions, (Albany,
NY: SUNY Press, 1995), p. 8.

[46]Ahlstrom, p. 1078.

during this period.[47]

During this era, the Feminist movement, increase in numbers of women in the job market, educational gains (by mid-1980, women received half of the bachelors/masters degrees and a third of all doctorates)[48] and active nature of women within churches and denominations (being at least 10% greater than that of men) affected churches and society at large. In a 'flip-flop' of this century, older, traditional denominations, which were once slow to allow leadership positions to women, opened full ordination opportunities for all. Some Protestant groups, who early on were open to women, since WW II raised theological objections to women's ordination.[49]

Revolutionary Feminist responses clouded understandings of NIRMs. 'Goddess' religion sought the recovery of ancient religions with female deities.[50] Identified as 'wicca' with covens, environmental sensitivity and 'Mother Earth' power sources, the movement became identified in popular religious

---

[47]Up to 30% of the military community is African-American. See Edwin Dorn, ed., <u>Who Defends America?, Race, Sex and Class</u> in <u>the Armed Forces,</u> (Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political Studies Press, 1989), p. 97. The presence and popularity of Gospel services and Black Pentecostalism (Church of God in Christ) within Army chapel programs addresses many needs raised by NIRMs.

[48]Noll, p. 512.

[49]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 513. One group to 'buck this trend' was the Salvation Army. More than one-half of the clergy in the Salvation Army was female, 3,037 out of 5,095. See Ronald B. Flowers, <u>Religion in Strange Times: The 1960s and 1970s,</u> (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), p. 219.

[50]Ronald B. Flowers, <u>Religion in Strange Times: The 1960s and 1970s</u> (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), p. 204.

culture as another spin-off of Satanic religion. This aroused

alarmist tendencies within established religion.

Selected Aspects
of One Church's (Reformed Church in America) Response

"...the confrontational approach has had little success...In
the long run, the best response to the NIRM's is not the
launching of a crusade..."[51]

In this section I analyze the work and witness of my

denomination, the Reformed Church in America. The analysis is

beyond the scope of purposes for Unit Ministry Teams.[52] However,

the conclusions which follow merit our attention.

In contrast to the confrontational style, the Reformed

Church's historic vision for world mission--which applies to our

treatment of NIRMs--is sensitive and meaningful. Summarized in

three documents ("The Relation Between Christianity and Islam,"

[Report of the Commission on Theology, June 1986];[53] the "Report

of the Division of World Mission" [Report of the General Program

Council, June 1985],[54] and "The Evangelization of the Jews,"

[Report of the Commission on Theology, June 1981][55]), the

following uplifting themes characterize the mission perspective:

----

[51]John A. Saliba, "Dialogue With the New Religious
Movements: Issues and Prospects," Journal of Ecumenical Studies,
(Winter 93), pp. 58, 80.

[52]For a full treatment see "New and Intense Religious
Movements: Context, Response and Implications for Army
Chaplains," submitted for CH 435 -- Sects and Cults in America, 9
January 1996, Princeton Theological Seminary.

[53]Minutes of General Synod (MGS), 1986, pp. 281-297.

[54]MGS, 1985, pp. 269-276.

[55]James I. Cook, ed., pp. 185-197.

reconciliation/witness; quiet sensitivity/respect for human

rights; patience, endurance, faithfulness; self-appraisal/

repentance; and optimism/hope.[56]

Could we not incorporate these traits into our work with

NIRMs? Must we constantly approach NIRMs with an attitude of

fear and upset? Must interactions with NIRMs continually cause

"rising blood pressures?" Must an "abrogation of objectivity"

and "passionate, unreasoning even vituperous" diatribe take

place?[57] Must we constantly see ourselves as "competitors and

---

[56]Reconciliation/witness--"Jesus Christ calls his Church to
a ministry of reconciliation in a divided world (II Cor.
5:18)...the term 'witness' is preferred when describing Christian
vocation...not so much a *talking at* as *speaking with* Muslims that
makes what Christians have to say meaningful." "Muslim Community
in Christian Theological Perspective," MGS, (1986), pp. 282, 291.
   Quiet sensitivity/respect for human rights--"...the gift
must be shared in a way which reflects the mind of
Christ...who...emptied himself, taking the form of a servant
(Phil. 2:6,7)...People free to believe without a sense of having
been coerced into faith or pressured away from faith." "World
Mission," MGS, (1985), p. 269.
   Patience, endurance, faithfulness--"Patience, rejoicing in
the few who receive, recognizing the integrity of those who
choose not to, and, without anxiety for the present, looking to
the day...Faithfulness, not success, is the mark of a martyr
[witness which]...leaves in the hands of God's sovereign mercy
the question of results, frees witness from the need to control
the situation and, thus, from the temptation to manipulate"
Ibid., (1986), pp. 291-292.
   Self-appraisal/repentance--"Do Christians have anything
better to offer them? Do Christians show this in their
relationships with them? Are Christians loving, forgiving,
caring people? Do Christians have something in their personal
lives that Muslims do not have in Islam?" Ibid., p. 355.
   Optimism/hope--"Limited response is an enigma with which
Paul struggled...on the contrary, he was full of hope...[which]
sprang from his deep insight into the mystery of the electing
grace of God (Romans 11:28-32)...[in the m]eantime, maintain a
loving, consistent witness in word and deed at every opportunity
God provides" ("Biblical Perspective on the Evangelization of the
Jews for the RCA Today," Church Speaks, ed. James I. Cook, pp.
194, 195.

[57]Felicitas D. Goodman, "The Discomfiture of Religious
Experience," Religion, Number 4, 21, (Oct. 1991), p. 339.

adversaries, rather than participators or collaborators in the universal quest for religious meaning?"[58]   Can we apply a mature, world mission perspective to our approach, especially considering the "zeal and self-righteousness" which dominated NIRMs in the formative years is subsiding, whereby they've "become part of the mainstream culture?"[59]

This approach, as described by Byron Haynes, can be a "difficult middle way."[60]   Using the RCA's report on the relation between Christianity and Islam as his primary text, this former director of the Office of Christian-Muslim Relations at the National Council of Churches argues that those who "appreciate and participate in dialogue and its emphasis on reconciliation; yet...proclaim an understanding of the Gospel by means of the older, traditional missiology" may struggle, may often be pulled in two directions, yet maintain respect for others and the integrity of their Christian tradition.[61]   Applied to NIRMs, this perspective offers an approach which concurs with Catholic

---

[58]John A. Saliba, p. 53.

[59]Ruth A. Tucker, "In Search of Respectability," Christianity Today, (5 Feb. 1990), p. 15.

[60]Byron L. Haines, "Perspectives of American Churches on Islam and the Muslim Community in North America: An Analysis of Some Official and Unofficial Statements" in ed. Y.Y. Haddad, The Muslims of America, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 44-45.

[61]"...the significance of this carefully worded statement ['The Difficult Middle Way,' the RCA's position with respect to Muslims and Islam] will not be missed. The ordering of peace and reconciliation between human communities is affirmed...because such effort is at the heart of genuine Christian witness...Yet other statements...clearly emphasize that all faithful witness speaks to the authority of Christ within all human relations" (Ibid.), p. 45.

scholar John Silba's appraisal:

> "In the long run, the best response to the NRM's [new religious movements] is not the launching of a crusade but the deepening of one's faith, which manifests itself in one's daily life and experience and in the way one relates to people of other religious convictions."[62]

Implications for the
Army's Religious Support Program.

> "Ungrounded in biblical faith, many Americans of all ages are vulnerable and are drawn to a wide variety of bizarre spiritual movements. Through inattention on the part of churches, and lethargy on the part of the laity, the churches of our nation have permitted a hugh spiritual vacuum to develop, one which is drawing in millions of unwitting and unsuspecting Americans."[63]

> "War is very simple, direct and ruthless."

> --George S. Patton, Jr., Diary Entry, 15 April 1943[64]

My acquaintance with NIRMs within the Army includes the Worldwide Church of God (Armstrong), Jehovah's Witnesses, Native American practices, Astrology and Occult presence, Transcendental Meditation, various Satanic influences, extremist "militia religion," Black Muslims, New Age inclinations, and the continuing impact of world religions on soldiers. To address the needs raised by those attracted to NIRMs--soldiers, family members and civilians in the greater Army community--requires an extensive, far-reaching religious support strategy. In the following section, I outline such a design, seeking to answer the

---

[62]John Silba, p. 80.

[63]George H. Gallup and Robert Bezilla, <u>The Religious Life of Young Americans,</u> (Princeton, NJ: George H. Gallup International Institute, 1992), p. 14.

[64]As quoted by James H. Toner, <u>The Sword and the Cross, Reflection on Command and Conscience,</u> (New York: Praeger, 1992), p. 85.

following: (1) What is the specific Army context?   (2) How can

we cultivate a climate of acceptance, unity and mature

leadership?   (3) What religious education and worship insights

apply?   (4) How do we deal directly with NIRM expressions?

(1) What is the specific Army context?   The Army community

is in many ways a closed society, insulated from the surrounding

culture.   It's a 'blue and white collar,' often 'compulsive'

environment, where families must balance the demands of two

"greedy institutions--the family itself and military obligations

in general."[65]

The overall population is 61% married, 95% of recruitees

have high school diplomas, up to 30% are African American, and

15% are female.   Young soldiers, while "patriotic in their own

right... overwhelmingly [join] for the benefits it

provides...money for college and skill training."[66]   They enter

the military reflecting the trends displayed by the broader

---

[65]"The military is almost unique in its constellation of
requirements...individual commitment and self-sacrifice is
legitimated through operational normative values which compel the
individual to accept great demands on his [her] time and
energy...Important societal trends--women's roles (in the work
force), increases in married junior enlisted personnel, sole
parents, active-duty mothers, dual-service couples--military
families are becoming greedier, increasing the potential for
military/family conflict."   M.W. Segal, "Military and Family as
Greedy Institutions" in The Military, More Than Just a Job? ed.
C.C. Moskos and F. R. Wood, (McLean, Virginia: Pergamon-Brassey's
International Defense Publishers, 1988), pp. 80-81.

[66]Major General Kenneth W. Simpson, "Recruiting Quality
Soldiers for America's Army," Army, (Oct 1994), pp. 162-163.
Private Arundel Hunte, 18, of Bedford-Stuyvesant, lured by "up to
$30,000 in college tuition," speaks for many new recruits: "'I
thought I'd go into the Army, straighten myself out, earn the
tuition but also get some discipline...If you don't have
discipline, you can't do anything." Clyde Haberman, "Recruiting
for the Army in the Shadow of Bosnia," New York Times (@ 5 Dec
1995).

society, a society which has increasingly higher suicide rates, rising reports of physical and verbal abuse, and where 6 of 10 marriages currently end in divorce.[67]

Researcher George Barna identifies the following traits as descriptive of "Baby Busters," the 18-25 year-olds who make up a majority of the military population: Stress is a big factor, due to the pressures of living fast-paced lives and their lack of trust in the world at-large. First-hand knowledge and experience become their orientation. A 'relative' and personalized truth are expressed in the watchwords "live and let live...believe in yourself...just never give up."[68]

Officers--self-reliant, driven, college educated--frequently put in 60 to 80 hour work weeks. Too often the atmosphere, especially in divisions and deployable units, is one of urgency, a hyper "go-go...this is it" environment. The temptation for work addiction is all too present. In many, the resulting lack of time and energy for spiritual matters allows for little religious input.

Chaplains, sucked into the vortex of this frenzied whirlwind, can easily lose perspective. In receiving the brunt of negative 'venting' by counselees, some too readily relinquish their enthusiasm and drive.

(2) How can we create a climate of acceptance, unity and mature leadership? Pollster George Gallup Jr., in answering the

---

[67]George Gallup, Jr., comments during address to Theological Student's Fellowship, 13 Dec., 1995, Princeton Theological Seminary.

[68]George Barna, The Invisible Generation, Baby Busters, (Glendale, Calif: Barna Research Group, 1992), pp. 28, 78, 81.

question 'What can the church do to aid young people in developing their spiritual lives?' identifies eight features of successful youth programs. The eighth attribute speaks of a climate of acceptance.

> "This above all--no matter what befalls them in life, they can count upon the love of God and the love of their fellow congregants. It is probably safe to say that no child who has felt this has ever left the church or its ways."[69]

We create this accepting climate when we project heartfelt warmth and an atmosphere of healing, arising from our own spiritual reservoirs cultivated through prayer and reflection. Becoming "contemplatives in the heart of the world and the world's struggles" (Mother Teresa) or "signals of the transcendent" (Peter Berger) are realistic goals. Then we can take the initiative, visiting guidance counselors in our schools, clubs and helping agencies on our posts, in addition to the more expected unit presence. Demonstrating this crucial attitude of 'caring acceptance' is essential.

In addition, we must be mature leaders. Too often our leadership--possessed with urgency, fervor, drive and enthusiasm--succumbs to the temptation to see the world in alarmist, cataclysmic 'going to hell in a hand basket' terms. With 'wringing hands' and negative resignation, we too readily forfeit tremendous opportunities to leaven our posts and units by possessing positive, mature, confident, 'calmed by God'

---

[69]George Gallup and Robert Bezilla, pp. 18-19. The authors identify six needs of the young: (1) Life is meaningful and has purpose. (2) Sense of community and deeper relationships. (3) Need to be appreciated and loved. (4) Be listened to--to be heard. (5) Feel that one is growing in the faith. (6) Practical help in developing a mature faith (pp. 12 - 14).

leadership.   When we despair of the influence of NIRMs in our

midst, the words of theologian John Stott are applicable.

> "[There is] something patently spurious about heresy,
> and something self-evidently true about the truth.   Error
> may spread and be popular for a time.   But it 'will not get
> very far.'   In the end it is bound to be exposed, and
> truth...vindicated...God has preserved his truth in the
> church."[70]

'Unity over self' is important.   In addition to our charge

to support the 'free exercise of religion' for all our personnel,

a further responsibility--the modeling of interfaith cooperation

and understanding--is ours.[71]   We replace fear with sensitivity

and patience.   We support and encourage the work of fellow-

believers in our midst.

(3) What religious education and worship insights apply?

Professor of Religious Studies and Sociology at the University of

California, Santa Barbara, Phillip Hammond, does not jest when he

says "There's a lot of loose religiosity floating around."[72]   Too

many of our soldiers and family members have an "intellectually

blind faith--they need to be shown the strengths of their faith,

to think critically."[73]   The need for knowing our spiritual

history--roots, identity, doctrine and tradition--is crucial.

The absence of such knowledge is especially noticeable in those

-----

[70]As quoted by Enroth, <u>Lure of Cults and New Religions,</u>
(Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press, 1987), p. 110.

[71]"Past generations in the melting pot of America struggled
to understand different traditions of Protestants, Catholics and
Jews.   Now, to these faiths, are added Muslims, Buddhists and
other faiths from Africa and Asia.   Interfaith understanding,
especially for our youth, must assume new responsibilities."
George Gallup and Robert Bezilla, p. 16.

[72]As quoted in Russell Chandler, p. 313.

[73]George Gallup and Robert Bezilla, p. 18.

attracted to NIRMs or purely secular pursuits.

By default, we chaplains leave education responsibilities to directors of religious education (DREs). Our soldiers, officers and family members who are looking for religious education challenges, miss out. We--the ordained clergy of the Army community--are often the only ones uniquely trained to meet this education need and excite others to the heritage and tradition of their faith.[74]

Too often our chapel programs jerk forward with energy spurts and then fizzle, depending on the work of a dedicated few or the length of time a given chaplain is assigned. The lack of well thought out, consistently applied, achievable goals and vision quickly becomes apparent. During energy spurts, congregation members are burdened. During times of retrenchment, stable religious support suffers. To have a steady, unpretentious worship experience, following the 'less is more' adage, can create spiritual continuity. Over the long haul, such an approach can go far to meet the needs addressed by NIRMs.

Over ambitious chapel programs tend to 'scare people off.' An uncomplicated involvement in the church year (Advent/Lent/ Pentecost)--focused on the elementary doctrines expressed in the creeds and grounded in the experiences of life--will do much to educate members in essentials of the faith.

Our outreach can center on the 'life cycle' of

---

[74]The words of Professor Vander Werff challenge chaplains as well. "Many theologians have been preoccupied with secularism and many denominational executives with organization, while the church's ministry has been neglected" (Vander Werff, p. 15). Rather than secularism and organization, our preoccupation is too often with short term unit concerns.

congregational members. For young soldiers and their families,
pastoral support in specific life cycle experiences--childbirth,
marriage, death of loved ones, family illness--can readily assist
in addressing spiritual needs. "Understanding this deceptively
simple pattern is crucial to understanding the present and future
status of religious life in America."[75]

Rather than see the half-empty cup because many single
soldiers do not eagerly attend chapel, we can remain thankful for
those who do come. We can keep messages "upbeat and short,"[76]
being creative in approach. "When was the last time you visited
a church and saw a video clip? Or heard a preacher talk about
things happening on the streets?"[77] Young soldiers must
genuinely perceive in us an authenticity that "people do
matter...[that we are] emotionally sensitive" building on the
relational character of faith expression.[78] By supporting small
group development within chapels--Protestant Men/Women of the
Chapel; Catholic Women of the Chapel--we enhance opportunities to
develop such relationships.

(4) How do we deal directly with NIRM expressions? The
following guidance assists us: maintaining civility; realizing
perceptions are important but we must get 'our facts straight;'
recognizing the subtleties of New Age influence; and watching
out, less we become swallowed by the 'big-green-machine.'

---

[75]George Gallup and Jim Castelli, p. 91.

[76]George Barna, p. 166.

[77]So asks a Baby Buster in Ibid., p. 109.

[78]Ibid., p. 128.

To maintain our civility means first that we take a positive approach in dealing with NIRMs. "Cult members, Satanic worshipers and religious charlatans are accomplished seducers of the young, preying upon their natural curiosity and good will. Don't preach about...[don't preach at] them."[79]

Civility also encourages us to avoid the trap of cynical, extremist, militant religion.[80] Promoting rigid doctrinal and political views may bring speedy popularity with some members of our communities. However, the sense of trust betrayed soon becomes evident. 'Culture wars' rhetoric, with "heated debates, apologetic arguments and diatribes"[81] is not the language of dialogue and does little to promote the Gospel of peace.

In dealing with NIRMs--especially when Satanic rumors surface--perceptions are important. Alleged Satanic involvement in day care centers at Ft. Bragg, NC, and the Presidio of San Francisco, closed those agencies for a time.[82] In early 1992, the 'bust' of Satanic cult activity at Curundu Junior High School, a Department of Defense School near Howard Air Force Base on Panama's Pacific coast, resulted in relocation stateside of some families, and hospitalization/treatment of a number of

---

[79]George Gallup and Robert Bazilla, p. 16.

[80]By 'militant religion' I mean a very rigid, very conservative, 'bordering on extremist' perspective embracing political/social/theological issues which reinforce the more reactionary political views of our society.

[81]John Saliba, p. 65.

[82]See David Bromley and Susan Ainsley, "Satanism and Satanic Churches: The Contemporary Incarnation" in Timothy Miller, ed., America's Alternative Religions, p. 405 and The Satanism Scare, Joel Best, ed., (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1991).

potentially suicidal students.[83]

Yet, especially in our environment where satanist talk so readily leads to hysteria and rumor, we must balance perceptions with correct, verifiable facts. Too often, just the mention of satanic activity creates a frenzied state where 'urban legends' and rumors induce a crisis state.[84] Too often, the "[S]atanic tradition has been carried almost totally by the imaginative literature of non-Satanists...who describe the practices in vivid detail in the process of denouncing them."[85]

Awareness of the subtleties of New Age influence can sensitize us to the necessity of modeling and promoting genuine peace. Says one 'Baby Buster,' "I don't go for all that wacked out stuff--the crystals and all. But the philosophy is good: harmony with the universe, peace with yourself and others, striving for a higher purpose. But it's not really something you can get your hand on..."[86]

In watching out lest we become swallowed up by 'the big-green-machine,' I mean that chaplains must resist the temptation to endorse those elements of Army life that border on the 'cultic.' When we unreservedly bless a 'one nation under God' civil religion, we jeopardize our ability to be prophetic to the institution itself, too readily wrapping a symbolic American flag

---

[83]See Jack Anderson and Michael Binstein, "Feds bust Satanic cult, thwart suicide," The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., (28 Feb., 1992), p. A17.

[84]See David Bromley and Susan Ainsley, pp. 410-409.

[85]J. Gordon Melton as quoted in Ibid., p. 406.

[86]George Barna, p. 167.

around the cross.   When we fail to call for confession in our midst, we do our nation and our God a disservice.   When we silently condone institutional practices which allow for only one political/religious viewpoint, we overlook our God-given responsibility.   When we fail to address needs raised by NIRMs, we neglect ordination promises.   In the process, we acquiesce to larger, institutional powers, and stifle our callings as God's servants.

Within this paper, I have asserted that chaplains can address the issues and needs raised by NIRMs.   In agreement with Jesuit theologian John Saliba, NIRMs "may be here to stay for a while...If history has taught us one lesson, it is that the best way to approach them is not by heated intellectual debates, nor by drastic, emotional accusations, denunciations, and condemnations, nor by supercilious sarcasm and satire."[87]

When we understand the broader societal/ecclesiastical context spawning such groups; and analyze past denominational responses, then we can identify a straightforward, comprehensive strategy which speaks to the needs raised.   Heated confrontation is not the approach--neither is neglect.

---

[87]"The New Religious Movements: Some Theological Reflections," p. 118.

Bibliography

Anderson, Jack, and Michael Binstein, "Feds bust Satanic cult, thwart suicide." The Patriot News 28 Feb. 1992: A17.

Ahlstrom, Sydney E., A Religious History of the American People. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972.

Barna, George, The Invisible Generation: Baby Busters, Glendale, Calif.: Barna Research Group, 1992.

Berkowitz, S.D. and R.E. Gussner, "Scholars, Sects and Sanghas, Recruitment to Asian-Based Meditation Groups in N. America." Sociological Analysis 1988: 49, 2, 136-170.

Best, Joel, James Richardson, David Bromily, ed., The Satanism Scare, New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1991.

Bezilla, Robert, and George H. Gallup, Jr., The Religious Life of Young Americans, Princeton, NJ: George H. Gallup International Institute, 1992.

Bromley, David and Thomas Robbins, "What Have We Learned About New Religions? New Religious Movements as Experiments," Religious Studies Review, July 1993: Vol. 19 #3, 209-213.

Castelli, Jim and George Gallup Jr., The People's Religion (American Faith in the 90s), New York: MacMillan, 1989.

Chandler, Russell, Racing Toward 2001 (Forces Shaping America's Religious Future), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan (Harper Collins), 1992.

"Christian Faith Report of the Theological Commission," Minutes of the General Synod, 1979, Grand Rapids, MI: Color Graphics, 1979, p. 135.

"Christian Witness to Islam," (Report of the Commission on Theology), Minutes of the General Synod, 1994, Grand Rapids, MI: Reformed Church Press, 1994: 348-359.

Cook, James I., The Church Speaks (Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America #15), Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985.

Dorn, Edwin ed, Who Defends America? (Race, Sex and Class in the Armed Forces), Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political Studies Press, 1989.

Enroth, Ronald, Lure of the Cults and New Religions, (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1987).

Enroth, R.M., and J.G. Melton, Why Cults Succeed Where the Church Fails, Elgin, IL: Brethren 1985.

Evenhouse, Bill, <u>Reasons I</u>, (Sects and Cults with Non-Christian Roots), Grand Rapids, MI: Bible Way Christian Reformed Publishing House, 1981.

Flowers, Ronald B., <u>Religion in Strange Times: The 1960s and 1970s</u>, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984.

Gabriel, Trip, "Boomers: The 'Not As I Did' Parents," <u>New York Times</u>, 30 Nov. 1995: C1,4.

Goodman, Felicitas D., "The Discomfiture of Religious Experience," <u>Religion</u>, Oct. 1991: 21, 339-343.

Grandberg-Michaelson, Wesley, "Vision for the Future" (Report to the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America), New York: Reformed Church in America, 11 June 1995.

Haberman, Clyde, "Recruiting for the Army in the Shadow of Bosnia," <u>New York Times</u>, @ 5 Dec. 1995.

Hammond, P. ed, <u>The Sacred in a Secular Age</u>, Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1985.

Hoekema, Anthony, <u>The Four Major Cults</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1963.

Hondorp, David, "A Challenge to the Church, Part 3," <u>Church Herald</u>, 3 April 1981: 14-15.

Kyle, Richard, <u>The Religious Fringe</u> (History of Alternative Religions in America), Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.

Marty, Martin E. ed., <u>New and Intense Movements</u> (Modern American Protestantism and Its World #11), Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers Inc., 1993.

Meyer, John, "A Challenge to the Church, Part 2," <u>Church Herald,</u> 3 April 1981: 10-12.

Miller, Timothy, <u>America's Alternative Religions</u>, Albany, New York: SUNY Press 1995.

Moskos, C.C. and F.R. Wood ed, <u>The Military</u> (More Than Just a Job?), McLean, Virginia: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1988.

Muck, Terry, <u>Alien Gods on American Turf,</u> Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1990.

Noll, Mark A., <u>A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992.

"Report of the Division of World Mission," <u>Minutes of the General Synod, 1986,</u> Holland, MI: Holland Litho, 1986: 281-297.

Saliba, John A., "The New Religious Movements: Some Theological Reflections," <u>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</u>, Spring 1979: Vol. 6, #1, 113-118.

Saliba, John A., "Dialogue With the New Religious Movements: Issues and Prospects," <u>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</u>, Winter 1993: 51-80.

Schuppert, Mildred W., <u>A Digest and Index of the Minutes of the General Synod of the RCA, 1958-1977</u>, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979.

Scott, Gini Graham, <u>Cult and Countercult</u> (Contributions to Sociology #38), Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1980.

Simpson, Kenneth W., "Recruiting Quality Soldiers for America's Army," <u>Army</u>, Oct. 1994: 159-161.

Tapia, Andres, "Reaching the First Post-Christian Generation," <u>Christianity Today,</u> 12 Sept. 1994: 18-23.

"The Muslim Community in Christian Theological Perspective," (Report of the Commission on Theology), <u>Minutes of the General Synod, 1985,</u> Holland, MI: Holland Litho, 1985: 269-277.

Tipton, Steven M., <u>Getting Saved from the Sixties</u>, Berkeley, California: University of Calif. Press, 1985.

Tucker, Ruth A., "In Search of Respectability," <u>Christianity Today</u>, 5 Feb 1990: 14-17.

Vander Werff, Lyle, "A Challenge to the Church, Part 1," <u>Church Herald</u>, 20 March 1981: 12-13.

Wuthnow, Robert, <u>Restructuring of American Religion</u> (Society and Faith Since WW II), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.